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“PREJUDICE”: THE RHETORICAL IMPACT ON DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION ETHICS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Cyril E. Latzoo

May 2019

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2019

“PREJUDICE”: THE RHETORICAL IMPACT ON DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION ETHICS

By

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Approved March 14, 2014

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ABSTRACT

“PREJUDICE”: THE RHETORICAL IMPACT ON DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION ETHICS

By

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May 2019

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Ronald Arnett

This work seeks to elaborate upon the contributions of dialogic communication ethics to a rhetorical understanding of prejudice. The aim is to address the problematic nature of ethical rhetoric apropos of dialogic communication, arguing that there are contending views in the community of memory, and that prejudice is an integral aspect of dialogic communication ethics. Drawing upon Arnett’s concept of dialogic ethics, I argue that there is need for a “dialogic turn” towards the notion of prejudice in the postmodern era. I begin by looking at Chesebro (1969), Arnett (1987), Johannesen (2001), and Arnett, Arneson and Bell (2006) to advance the concept of rhetorical prejudice which I define in terms of the hermeneutical principle of Gadamer, a path to what Arnett describes as “fundamental prejudice” that renders efficacious “the interpretive act of dialogue.” To demonstrate the significance of this concept, I provide a historical analysis of the concept of prejudice from the classical period, early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the

Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and Modernity to Postmodernity. Through the history of the notion of prejudice, the rhetoric of prejudice is explored from the perspective of dialogic ethics. Although my concern is the rhetorical implication of the concept of prejudice, my emphasis upon ethics is intended to reveal dialogue as an existential-phenomenological aspect of communication ethics necessary to the rhetorical nature of prejudice in post modernity.

The hope is that this study will help frame a dialogic communication ethics within a history of the problematic term, prejudice, with the objective of displaying the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethic begins not in objectivity nor in the commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that shapes the conversation and its conventional patterns. This essay unmask the past assumption that prejudice can and should be always eradicated. Such thinking falls prey to the modernist set of assumptions hostile to the existential reality, to use Buber's expression, "that we walk in the modern-day light."

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CHAPTER ONE—Introduction

There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,

And—every—single—one—of—them—is—right!

(Kipling, 1999, p. 452)

There are no doubts that there are unsettling boundaries that frame our existential *Weltanschauung* and account for its significance. These boundaries are accompanied by a “unity of contraries” (Buber, 1965b) that foreground the taken for granted communicative “everydayness” (Heidegger, 1962) of situated difference. Underpinning this proposition is the inevitability of fundamental prejudice in human interaction. Postmodern theorizing about multiple ethics points to this inevitability in its originary sense of the dialectical meeting of difference (see Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Prejudice nurtures communication *praxis* in this postmodernity, an era of diverse forms of discourse and heterogeneity of cultures, traditions, and narrative structures (see Schrag, 1998). Prejudice is an acknowledgment of “assumptions that guide ... or taint the ground from which we render a judgment” (Arnett, Bell, & Fritz, 2010, p. 114). This work is a public welcome of prejudice as the ground on which one stands in every human interaction. Prejudice is described variously in rhetoric and philosophy of communication as “radical alterity” (Levinas, 1969), “individuality” (Tocqueville, 1969), “recalcitrance” (Burke, 1984), “ethics of self-expression or self-realization” (Gare, 2006), to mention a few. These various metaphors corroborate the necessity of prejudice in postmodernity, and so the contention of this dissertation *a la* Dewey (1988) that prejudice is not something “bad” to be eradicated (p. 243).

This work is an attempt to reinstate rhetorical prejudice as a constitutive element of dialogic communication ethics, believing that prejudice not only privileges the necessity of co-

creating meaning in a world replete with contentions, but also welcomes the potential to address the postmodern challenge of “fractured spirit” (Arendt, 1998), “situatedness” (Benhabib, 1992), and a *particularity* that rejects “originative agency” (Arnett, 2008a), and bears witness to the failed promise of monolithic dogmatism and the establishment of unambiguous authority by “a new oligarchy of wealth” (Arnett, Fritz, & Holba, 2007b, p. 116). This work is structured on the assumption that prejudice displays the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethic begins neither in objectivity nor in the commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that shapes the conversation and its conventional patterns.

This work elaborates upon the contributions of dialogic communication ethics to a rhetorical understanding of prejudice, challenging the assumption that prejudice should always be eradicated. In this work, prejudice is treated as a productive phenomenon of human interpretation and interaction in line with Gadamer’s (1975/1989) assertion that prejudice discloses our understanding of the world as well as our way of being in the world. In order to understand, we open ourselves to prejudices. Being open does not mean starting from no prejudice or bias; rather, we learn to differentiate productive prejudices from unproductive or counterproductive prejudices. Stanley Deetz (1978) notes that “the person who imagines himself free from prejudices not only becomes unconsciously dominated by them but cuts himself [herself] off from their positive insight” (p. 18). The positive insight of prejudice allows us to draw on others as a means for correcting our understanding (White, 1994). Thus, instead of adopting an objective and neutral stance, Gadamer’s approach calls for bracketing of all presumptions and biases and qualifying them as such in order to understand others’ perspectives compared to our own prejudices.

Gadamer would have agreed with John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdune (1990) in their warning about the “anonymity of the collective” that seeks to *level habits of individuality* (Rodríguez, 2012, p. 77). Naisbitt and Aburdune called for attentive listening to the signs of the time. Difference and diversity are the signs of the time, and they invoke phenomenological, philosophical, existential, and ethical response to the proclivity for totalitarian erasure of difference by asserting fundamental prejudice. Fundamental prejudice provides communicative partners with opportunities for enthymematic confession and listening to the narrative biases that ground the signs of the time—multiplicity, diversity, contention, and fragmentation.

I begin this work by exploring the various definitions and treatment of the concept of prejudice by looking at the scholarship on the concept of prejudice, its implicit and explicit use in the rhetorical tradition, the inevitability of prejudice, the connection between prejudice and rhetoric, and prejudice and dialogic communication ethics. Within these various discussions, the significance of this work to dialogic communication ethics is teased out: dialogic communication ethics begin neither in objectivity nor in the commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that shape the conversation and its conventional patterns.

Definition and Treatment of the Concept of Prejudice

Prejudice is mainly understood as a problem of social psychology and defined in psychological terms (Jackman, 1994; Ropers & Pierce, 1995; Shield, 1986; Young-Bruehl, 1996). Recent treatment of the concept has been attributed to Gordon Allport (1979) who contends that prejudice is a corollary of alienation and denigration based on the flawed and misleading stereotypical conclusions toward others, and which, according to Adorno, Levinson, Sanford, and Frankel-Brunswick in *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), breed “the dominance-

submission, strong-weak, leader-follower dimension; identification with power figures; overemphasis upon the conventionalized attributes of the ego” as well as “projectivity,” *emotivism* reified as a social construction of reality (p. 228). Voltaire, a French philosopher, suggests that these traits derive from irrational perceptions of the “vulgar world” (see Edwards, 1908, p. 439). Thus, his definition of prejudice as “an opinion without judgment” (Voltaire, 2010, p. 251). When opinions are made sans *phronesis*—practical wisdom—human communication becomes a telling act, ever dismissive of the truth of the other.

It is this *standing in the way of the truth of the other* that has fraught treatments of “prejudice” with negative connotations. Michael Billig (2012) hoped that an exploration of the concept’s “ideological roots” from the perspectives of rhetorical criticism would reveal the “context of justification and criticism” of prejudice (p. 145). According to Billig,

The ideological basis ... lies in a claim to being rational, and, as such, the semantic use of ‘prejudice’ involves lay notions of the philosophy and psychology of rationality. This can be seen by considering the concept of ‘prejudice’ itself and its transformation from being a concept of Enlightenment philosophy to a concept which permits, by its apparent criticism, the expression of prejudice in everyday discourse. (p. 146)

However, between the ideological basis and everyday discourse lies a phenomenological suspicion of communicative actions which excise difference in the name of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1996) described as Husserlian “science of the phenomena of pure consciousness” (p. 62). In the pursuit of the Husserlian pure consciousness, Bonhoeffer called for avoiding the proclivity to bracket out difference because the “totality of life” does not rest within “pure idealism,” but an openness to new insights (p. 64). Arnett (2005) argued that new insights

flourish in “moments of blurred vision,” not in “undue assurance” (p. 14). The latter is inattentive, unresponsive to revelation, and stymies new insights. The unwillingness to engage new insights is tantamount to prejudice, a phenomenological aloofness that one can stand above history and cast judgment. For Allport (1979), phenomenological aloofness is the byproduct of prejudgment, which when left unchecked, becomes prejudice (p. 9).

The entry for prejudice in *The Oxford English Dictionary* defined the concept as “A previous judgement; *esp.* a judgement formed before due examination or consideration; a premature or hasty judgement; a prejudgement. This definition is consistent with the etymological rendering of *præjudicium*, Latin for judicial scrutiny prior to hearing. Thomas Hobbes (1904) suggests that a judicial presumption that is prior to hearing is tantamount to “prejudice”: “For all Judges ... if they refuse to hear[e] Proof[e], refuse to do Justice ... their Presumption is but prejudice; which no man ought to bring with him to the Seat of Justice, whatever precedent prejudgment” (p. 200). Hobbes placed the understanding of prejudice as otherwise than valid presumption within a judicial context, an understanding that prevailed in continental Europe—especially England—until the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries when Francis Bacon reformulated psychology as an epistemic interrogation of cognitive error.

Unlike Hobbes, Bacon situated his work within an epistemic interrogation methodic monism. The turn toward epistemic interrogation aided the shift in the treatment of prejudice, revealing the concept’s epistemological underpinning and imports. The paradigmatic turn in treatment of the concept (prejudice) was a result of a methodological questioning of judicial procedures and individual reasoning processes: “‘prejudice’ gained its epistemological salience in the context of sustained attack of Baconian science, and later ... on scholasticism. Besides designating a failure of legal decision procedures, ‘prejudice’ also came to designate a failure of

the individual reasoning process” (Hoffman, 2006, p. 386), a problem Bacon attributed to the deductive syllogism of Aristotle and the scholastics, whom he accused of engaging and promoting a sham method of learning.

Baconian science, contrary to Aristotelian deductive reasoning, was inductive. The inductive method focused on embedded axioms. Baconian science was a product of modern scientific and philosophical questioning of an overemphasis on “the Aristotelian ideal of disinterested philosophical contemplation of the world and its harmony” (Perumalil, 2006, pp. 82-83), and as a result, improving understanding by freeing humanity from unreflective dogmas, a byproduct of metaphysics. Bacon connected metaphysics to the enthrallment of human intellect. In *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, Bacon stated: “men have used to sever and withdraw their thoughts too soon and too far from experience and particulars, and have given themselves wholly up to their own meditations and arguments” (1875, p. 361). From this Baconian perspective, prejudice came to be understood as a cognitive error with devastating scientific consequences (see Farrington, 1964, p. 107).

For Bacon (1875), prejudices are idols that beset human understanding. Idols are “the deepest fallacies of the human mind: For they do not deceive in particulars, as the others do, by clouding and snaring the judgment; but by a corrupt and ill-ordered predisposition of mind, which as it were perverts and infects all the anticipations of the intellect” (p. 431). The perversion and infection lead to a tyranny of parochialism, bringing perception of reality in contact with inflexible ideology—such is the basis of irrationality, habits of the heart hooked to provincialism. Sometimes, provincialism may be a derivative of intrinsic habits of the heart (idols of the tribe) that can lead to the ethereal belief that “human understanding is of its own nature prone to suppose that the existence of more order and regularity than it finds” (p. 55).

Provincialism could be constituted as habits of heart which can lead to construals of individualism (idols of the cave) with the proclivity to divert and blur nature's light by superimposing "its own nature with it" (Bacon, 1875, p. 54). Sometimes, parochialism is a result of routinized semiotics (idols of the marketplace). The following often cited example from Bacon illustrates the dangers of the idols of the marketplace, a prevarication of natural philosophy that reifies parochialism.

The idols of the marketplace are the most troublesome of all: idols which have crept into the understanding through all alliances of words and names. For [wo]men believe that their reason governs words; but it also true that words react on the understanding; and this it is that has rendered philosophy and the sciences sophistical and inactive. Now words being commonly framed and applied according to the capacity of the vulgar, follow those lines of division which are most obvious to vulgar understanding. And whenever an understanding or greater acuteness or diligent observation would alter those lines to suit the division of nature, words stand in the way and resist change. (pp. 60-61)

The idols of the marketplace precipitate a tyrannical form of parochialism unresponsive to new ideas.

At other times, provincialism is a result of learned habits of the heart (idols of the theater). Such habits connect "philosophical systems" with "perverted rules of demonstration" (p. 62), prevaricating the unreflective obedience routinized *sensus communis* might exert. For Bacon, routinized *sensus communis* is nothing but routinized caricature because *sensus communis* is a stage play, representing worlds of its own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion" (p. 55). Aristotle (and the scholastics), for Bacon, offered a *sensus communis*, by way

of his deductive logical syllogism, an epistemic evil that plagued human understanding for centuries. To overcome the epistemic plague, Bacon called for an *epistemological humility*, an openness to new ideas and a renewed call for a learning in which “goodbye and welcome emerge in the same breath” (Arnett et al., 2007b, p. 130). Bacon suggests that

Those who have handled sciences have been either men of experiment or men of dogmas. The men of experiment are like the ant; they only collect and use; the reasoners resemble spiders, who make cobwebs out their own substance. But the bees take the middle course; it gathers its materials from the flowers of the garden and of the field, but transforms and transforms and digests it by the power of its own. Not unlike this is the true business of philosophy; for it neither relies solely or chiefly on the powers of the mind, not does it take the matter which it gathers from natural philosophy and mechanical experiments and lay up in the memory whole, as it finds it; but lays it up in the understanding altered and digested. Therefore, from a closer and purer league between the two faculties, the experimental and the rational, (such as has never yet been made) much may be hoped. (1875, pp. 92-93).

The hope is that philosophy moves from the subliminal dogmatism of deductive logical syllogism of Aristotle to a “pluralistic methodology” (Feyerabend, 1975), ever attentive to the embedded nature of induction. The former—for Bacon—breeds what Paul Feyerabend called the “law and order view of science” (p. 18), prone to an error in judgment. The latter offers pragmatic opportunities for learning, providing new ways to interrogate scientism.

Bacon’s program of scientific knowledge—a new system of the sciences—precipitated the founding of the Royal Society of London, an eighteen-century English organization credited

for bringing down the “iron curtain” that blocked scientism from open contact with scientific plurality. Apart from bringing down the iron curtain of separation, the Royal Society spurred a detailed epistemological interrogation of the prejudice. In the words of Hoffman, the organization “provided the framework for new ways to define prejudice and a new reason to expose it: prejudice was failure of reason that stood in the way of scientific advancement” (2006, p. 386). The new ways to define prejudice as well as a new reason to expose the concept offered an “interpreting otherwise” that invited the reconsideration of prejudice as an epistemological error in judgment. Epistemic flaws arise when scientism becomes unresponsive to diverse philosophical systems that shape discourse and interpretation.

Like Bacon, Descartes and Locke attribute prejudice to as an epistemic flaw that leads to an error in judgment. Judgment is an issue of will and understanding. The will, for Descartes, rests within the power of choice. “The faculty of the will consists alone in our having the power of choosing to do things or choosing not to do it ... to affirm or deny, pursue or shun those things placed before us by the understanding” (Descartes, 1993, p. 76); understanding, on the other hand, is a responsive acknowledgment of “the ideas of things as to which I can form a judgment” (p. 75). Error in judgment arises when there is a forceful conflation of the will and understanding (see Evans, 1993, pp. 53-56). According to Descartes, the conflation becomes an epistemological perception of reality imposed tacitly on children, leading to what he described as prejudices of childhood. “The principal cause of errors proceeds from the prejudices of our childhood” (Descartes, 1983, p. 32). Marquis de Condorcet (1955), mathematician, scientist, philosopher, educational reformer, and journalist who was in hiding from the Jacobin terror of the French Revolution, echoes this concern of Descartes saying, “Fallacies which are imbibed in infancy” are “in some way identified with the reason of the individual” (p. 100). In other words—for

Descartes—"a person's cultural context burdens him with the kind of prejudice which seems to make progress nigh impossible" (Schouls, 1989, p. 65). However, one can be freed from the bondage of prejudice through a methodological questioning of preconceived opinion provided by authority or society as well as abandoning ill-conceived prejudgments (Cottingham, Stoothoff, & Murdoch, 1985, p. 218).

Locke extends the methodological questioning of dogmatic ideologies and their negative impact on human reasoning. For Locke (1836), dogmatic ideologies are replete with opinions, reasonings, and actions "founded upon nothing else but a false supposition" (p. 436). Locke imputes the false suppositions to prejudice (p. 284). In addition Locked attributed the unreflective reliance on dogmatic ideologies to the myopic scholastic program of education (see Hoffman, 2006, p. 387).

In addition to the epistemological treatment of prejudice is the concept's psychological component. Locke (1836) attributes "madness" for which "prejudice is a general name" as rooted in "rational minds" (p. 284). As noted earlier, Locke saw prejudice as an offshoot of dogmatic ideologies and their corollary companions of flawed opinions, reasonings, and actions. These flaws—which Locke calls custom—become the prisms for human understanding, for they condition one's worldview. Apart from customs, our worldviews can be a result of "chance" which "comes in different men to be very different, according to their different inclinations, education, interests, & custom settles habits of thinking in the understanding ... there are such associations made by custom in the minds of most men ..." (p. 285). Hoffman (2006) gives an exegesis of this text. He writes,

Ideas could be correctly or incorrectly joined, and a major source of error, as Locke explains, is too much trust in complex ideas that come prejoined or

prejudged. In other words, while some ideas have a sound natural connection, like the idea “bird” and the idea “flying,” others, like “stars” and “small,” do not have a connection with any foundation in nature. These unnatural connections between ideas survive only because their rightness is prejudged and settled in custom and habit. (pp. 387-388)

Bacon’s new system of the sciences, Descartes and Locke’s epistemology portrayed prejudice as preconceived opinions that need to be set aside. Their treatment of prejudice prevailed through the eighteenth century continental Europe until Edmund Burke’s (1968) paradigmatic shift in the treatment of prejudice.

Burke framed prejudice not as an epistemological aberration but as a “manifestation of a collective rationality that exceeds the rational powers of the individual” (Hoffman, 2006, p. 388).

Instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason, because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and ages. (Burke, 1987, p. 183; cited in Hoffaman, 2006, p. 388)

Burke’s assertion highlights the relationship between prejudice and dogmatic ideologies in communities of memory. Prejudice foregrounds customs and traditions, and is the ground upon which profound judgment and common sense thrives. Thus, questioning dogmatic ideologies

leads to fragmentation as well as interrogates unfettered confidence in epistemic certainty. Such is the reason Edmund Burke, questioned the communicative standpoint of the French Revolution. Prejudice, according to Burke, should not be eradicated since it provides the epistemological and moral grounding for deliberation, a grounding found in the commonly accepted beliefs, values and practices of the community” (Whedbee, 1998, p. 172). Burke’s positive spin on the concept of prejudice—albeit skeptical of self-reflexivity—outlined by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975/1989). Gadamer’s take on the concept confirms the inevitability of the concept in postmodernity, an era defined by voices of doubt, limited authorial intent, narrative contention and difference.

The Inevitability of Prejudice

Postmodernity, faced with a multiplicity of voices and contending narratives, redirects our attention to the power and importance of prejudice in dialogue. From a postmodernist standpoint, prejudice discloses the rhetorical “complexities of human” interaction (Arneson, 2014). The complexities call for embracing “personal equations” (Burke, 1989, p. 123). These personal equations necessitate the communicative encounter with difference, which—according to Baxter and Montgomery (1996)—constitutes the dialectics of dialogue. The encounter with difference suggests the implicatures of attentiveness and responsiveness to embedded enthymemes in dialogic encounters.

We live in era of *incompletes*, and attentiveness to the *incompletes* is reminiscent of the Aristotelian invitation to enthymematic standpoints as well as points to the embeddedness of “grounded conviction” (Arnett, 2005). As Dietrich Bonhoeffer advocated in the *Drama* (1981) “Give me ground under my feet ... and all would be different ... Ground under your feet—I have

never understood it like that. I believe you are right. I understand—ground under your feet, to be able to live and die” (Bonhoeffer, 1981, pp. 46-47; cited in Arnett, 2005, p. 107). Arnett, Fritz, and Bell (2009) allude to the necessity of ground as “pragmatics of dialogic ethics”:

The pragmatic move to dialogue emerges first and foremost from a content view of communication ethics. Dialogue requires that one knows the ground from which one speaks, meet the Other with a willingness to learn, and learn about the ground from which Other’s discourse emerges. This view of dialogue begins with the importance of content—privileging content over style. The task of dialogic ethics is to meet whatever is before us—the good, the bad, and the ugly. The banal impulse of our time is to reject another’s idea because that person does not “do” dialogue as we demand. The move to demand transfers the communication from the possibility of dialogue to monologue in its most negative sense. (p. 223)

Modern discourse, like the Enlightenment project, made demand otherwise than dialogue primal in its commitment to the “deductivist monologues of one-way tyranny” (Christians, 1995, p. 59), dismissive of the ground of the Other. Such is the reason why Lyotard called for interrogating the totalizing ethics of modernity, arguing that it “situates persons as addressees, and in so doing *prohibits* dialogue” (Smith, 2008, p. 166). Lyotard (1984) framed the necessity of ground from an interrogative (agonistic) and descriptive (responsive) standpoint. Ground, for Lyotard, is a dialogic reality of everyday communicative experience, and its relevancy is evident in the everyday dialogic struggle for recognition. The quest for recognition is not a therapeutic command or imposition, but a derivative response and invitation to acknowledge fundamental prejudice. This work assumes that we cannot dismiss fundamental prejudice—the biased ground—of another.

Without the biased ground, one cannot communicatively engage difference, and with without prejudice, one cannot claim and name individuality. Prejudice, to paraphrase Julian Huxley, is a Bergsonian *élan vital*, an *élan* dialogic of human expressivity and relationality (see Gillies, 1996, p. 34). Kenneth Burke would agree with the rhetorical notion of prejudice and its necessity in human expressivity as the symbolic activation of language—not for purposes of compliance but consubstantiation. For Burke (1966) “any given situation derives its character from the entire framework of interpretations by which we judge It” (p. 35; cited in Littlefield and Quenette, 2007, p. 29). In today’s world of multiple voices, prejudice sharpens interpretation. This presupposition privileges the authoritative ethics of ground in contrast to any authoritarian ethics that subsumes individuality and difference. Authoritarian ethics co-opts and corrupts singularity, particularity, and individuality.

This work questions such rhetorical insensitivity and aloofness as authoritarian forms of persuasive relativism. In addition, this work calls for revisioning the notion of prejudice as situated “habits of the heart” that make human expressivity not a monologic act but a dialogic relationality. The point is that prejudice becomes the dialogic platform of radical otherness manifested through fragmented narratives, and holds communicative entry points of learning from difference. To paraphrase Pat Arneson (2007b) postmodernity proffers a philosophy of communication that makes fragmented narratives central to every communicative encounter. For Seyla Benhabib, these fragmented narratives, which she calls “fractured spirits” point to the necessity of fundamental prejudice because they “inform any discussion of human communication” (Pat Arneson, 2007b, p. 3). In other words, fundamental prejudice offers rhetorical opportunities for confessional shifts. Equally important to these confessional shifts is

acknowledging difference as a phenomenological reality of otherness with all its muddiness (Arnett, 2008b).

Such acknowledgment of difference with all its muddiness, the “tainted ground” (or fundamental prejudice) permits dialogic insights illustrative for engaging multiplicity, diversity, and plurality, phenomenological features of postmodernity. Fundamental prejudice, an inevitable metaphor for communication ethics, points to the burgeoning “unity of contraries,” which Martin Buber (1997) claims, constitute “the mystery at the innermost core of dialogue” (p. 17). Communication ethics as unity of contraries in the twenty-first century attends to this mystery by engaging prejudice as the bridge to otherness, claiming Ernesto Grassi’s (1980) “ingenious activity” of catching sight of relationships in terms of which learning occurs.

Prejudice as ingenious activity rests not on process but on human doing and deeds that intrinsically develop in our doing. The metaphors of “open inexhaustible” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), “rhetorical turn” (Schrag, 1986), “touchstones” (Friedman, 2002), “penultimate” (Arnett, 2005), and *enthymematic confession*, which I add to the conversation, allow for engaging the taken for granted assumption that prejudice, the primordial ground of difference, is not premised on authoritarian ethics, but authoritative ethics. Gadamer (1975/1989) was critical of authoritarian ethics because of its proclivity to displace fundamental bias, a danger the Enlightenment project was oblivious to (pp. 280-281). Authoritarian ethics imposes a telling that renders prejudice pariah in totalitarian discourse. Authoritative ethics, on the other hand, is responsive to the singularity of the other, inviting, instead a communicative praxis that is tantamount to hermeneutic conversation, listening to the different Other (Gadamer, 1972/2006, p. 358).

Rooted in an authoritative ethics, prejudice interrogates the authoritarian ethics of “victory, ideological, hegemony, or ... ‘having the last word’” (Herrick, 1992, pp. 133-134). From the perspectives of dialogic communication ethics, having the last word eclipses the ethical necessity of listening to the first word. Listening to the first word, contrasted from having the last word, informs us about enthymematic confession, bringing the “tainted ground” into an intersubjective relationship of ethical co-creation of meaning. Scholars of dialogue and communication ethics motivated by the concept of prejudice theorize its necessity, not from a Hegelian perspective of dialectics, but from a dialogic standpoint of difference, a defining sign of the (Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004; Arnett, 2007b; Arnett et al., 2010; Arnett, 2010; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Foucault, 2001). As noted by Arnett (2011b), the tainted grounded foregrounds learning:

A dialogic ethics that begins with knowing the ontological reality of tainted grounded and a willingness to confess a perspective assumes the pragmatic position of communication from a position that is not universal but committed to the particular, respectful of the distance between persons of difference, and ever attentive to learning from acknowledgment of one’s own position of learning from that of another ...” (pp. 54-55)

Prejudice in this sense is a confessional first principle of human communicative relationship because it offers “opportunity of learning, which is the natural by-product of meeting differences” (Arnett, Arneson, & Bell, 2007a, p. 144). In this postmodern era, prejudice is an embedded communicative reality with efficacious dialogic consequences: meeting the obvious yet mysterious different otherness before us. And this, Camus would argue, entails courage, the courage to confront both *the devil we know and the angel we don’t know*. Between the know and

the unknown lies the essential ethics of dialogic: embracing multiple horizons “without presuming first foundations, without the luxury of an objective metaphysical reality from which to begin” (Christians, 2010, p. 9). Prejudice is neither an ontological first principle, epistemological certainty, nor a metaphysical prescription of what reality is. Rather, it is a phenomenological and existential constitution of difference within the dialogic of ethics.

The future of dialogic communication ethics is viable because of its capability and willingness to accommodate and defend rhetorical prejudice with phenomenological, existential, and ethical response to the everydayness of difference. As we walk the path of dialogic communication ethics, the point is not pushing for an authoritarian ethics that demands a closed attention to the necessity of prejudice, but rather an authoritative ethics that commands an opened response to difference. Closed attention constitutes a perversion, leading to the treatment of the singular other as the “spoiled identity” (Goffman, 1963) to be quarantined, watched, isolated, contained, or even sanitized. This was the prevarication of the presumptuous epistemology of modernity, a presumptuousness that led to its insolvency (see Christians, 2010). For example, a prisoner of conscience might be kept under suicidal watch not for purposes of preserving his or her life, but for purposes of intelligence information. The individual becomes an object of information, a means to end—offering the powers that be an entitled authorial intent that they possess certainty and can always unlock uncertainty.

Unlike the authoritarian ethics of closed attention, the authoritative ethics of opened response situates prejudice within the dialogic framework of otherwise than epistemological certainty and ontological agency. The works of Buber and Levinas questioned these modern assumptions that gave rise to the tyranny of individualism with “invitations.” Buber invites us to the existential prejudice between persons; Levinas invites us to phenomenological prejudice as

an “ethical is” and as a dialogic necessity (Arnett, 2004). Buber’s existential ethics and Levinas phenomenological ethics point to both the “presence” and the “emergence” of prejudice in a postmodern age, permitting an opened response to difference. Prejudice announces the necessity for the meeting of differences, *au contraire* competing views vying to create totalitarian consensus. Prejudice invites a listening to and a learning from difference, articulates responsiveness to the rhetorical contention of competing goods that shape the postmodern engagement with communication ethics (Arnett et al., 2009).

Rhetoric and Prejudice

Kenneth Burke (1950) describes rhetoric as “the art of persuasion, or a study of the means of persuasion available for any given situation” (p. 46); however scholars like Starhawk, Sonja Foss, Cindy Griffin, Nel Noddings, Carol Gilligan, and Mary Daly, working from feminist perspectives, have questioned this totalitarian underpinning of rhetoric as persuasion. For example, Foss and Griffin (1992) questioned mainstream rhetorical theories’ proclivity for metanarratives and how these master narratives function to undermine difference. As a counterpoint for interrogating mainstream rhetorical theories, Foss and Griffin juxtaposed Burke’s rhetoric of persuasion with Starhawk’s rhetoric of “inherent value” in response to “the context for rhetoric, the nature of the rhetor, and the primary rhetorical strategies it features” (p. 333). By interrogating the mainstream rhetoric of domination, Foss and Griffin, by way of Starhawk, point to the inevitability of prejudice in human (communicative) relationships.

It could be argued that the necessity for prejudice has guided the postmodern rhetorical interrogations of Foss and Griffin, and Starhawk—prejudice understood as inherent value derives from “interconnection,” “immanent value,” and the rhetorical strategies of “mystery, ritual, and

power with” (Foss & Griffin, 1992, p. 333). The relationship between rhetoric and prejudice possibilitizes dialogue as “the power not to command, but to suggest and be listened to” (Starhawk, 1989, p. 10; cited in Foss and Griffin, 1992, p. 334). Such a positioning offers a rhetoric of “power-with” otherwise than a rhetoric of “power-over,” by engaging prejudice as a rhetorical necessity for countering systemic dogmatism: “Power-with is more subtle, more fluid and fragile than authority. It is dependent on personal responsibility, on our creativity and daring, and on the willingness of others to respond” (Starhawk, 1989, p. 11). Starhawk framed a dialogic sense of rhetoric shaped in agonistic conviction, not in a “conditioning to obey” a status quo.

Starhawk’s rhetoric of inherent value rests within the rhetorical construct of enthymematic relationship, such as Buber’s “interhuman” (1965a), Cissna and Anderson’s “moments of meeting,” “commons rhetoric,” “mutuality rhetoric,” “moments rhetoric,” “vulnerability rhetoric,” “praxis rhetoric,” and “recognition rhetoric” (2002; 2004, 2008), Benhabib’s “interactive universalism” (2002), and Hawhee’s “kairotic encounters” (2002), who move rhetoric beyond persuasion into what I call enthymematic encounters and rhetorically grounded prejudice. Cissna and Anderson’s (2008) “dialogic rhetoric,” for example, provides potential for exploring the relationship between rhetoric and grounded prejudice. Cissna and Anderson (2008) write,

Traditional rhetoric privileges persuasion ... A dialogic rhetoric assumes a more open and less controlled communicative arena ... Thus, in a dialogic rhetoric, the notions of individual control that are so crucial to a more traditional rhetoric are rendered meaningless as dialogue transcends control ... and, if dialogue is to result, we intend to listen, be open to and respectful of the other, and open to

influence by the other ... the purpose of rhetorical dialogue, then, is ... to invite
... (pp. 43-44)

Key to the metaphor of dialogic rhetoric is the issue of standpoint, which according to John Du Bois (2011) “functions” as the interpretive ground of prejudice (p. 55). Postmodern rhetorical theorizing privilege enthymematic encounters and rhetorically grounded prejudice (see Littlejohn & Foss, 2008, p. 51). This work articulates the taken-for-granted connection between prejudice and rhetoric, and how the connection brings communicative understanding to the fore. To illustrate this connection, I would like to comment on the relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics. This perspective derives from an understanding of prejudice as an interpretive standpoint, an explication Gadamer alludes to in his *Philosophical Hermeneutics*.

Gadamer provides a notion of philosophical hermeneutics that frames the interplay of rhetoric and prejudice apropos of philosophy of communication. With Gadamer, I believe that the philosophical hermeneutics of prejudice provides significant insights that are reached through an interpretive model that reclaims human relationship as a language of interpretive standpoint. For Gadamer, the interpretive standpoint is fundamental to understanding; it involves engaging a plurality of “meanings and contexts,” and shapes discourse. Meanings and contexts was foreshadowed by Gadamer’s notion of prejudice, offering four normative characteristics of the concept: “situatedness and embeddedness,” “fusion of horizons,” dialogic reciprocity, and linguisticity (see Gill, 2015, pp. 10-11). Pertinent to these characteristics is that prejudice is a way of being with the otherness of the other. In other words, prejudice opens the possibility for engaging alterity (Gadamer, 1989, p. 27).

This work listens to Gadamer’s (1975/1989) questions: “Does being situated within tradition really mean being subject to prejudices and limited in one’s freedom? Is not, rather, all

human existence, even the freest, limited and qualified in various ways?” (p. 277) to make a case for lived provincality as inevitable prejudice. From such a questioning, this work frames rhetoric “as a potential of human meetings” (Cissna & Anderson, 2008, p. 42). For Gadamer, the potential for meeting possibilitizes understanding. The implications are clearly articulated by Gadamer (1975/1989) in his treatment of prejudice as a dialogic structure for understanding:

[It] is a process of coming to an understanding ...that each opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not a particular individual but what he says. What is to be grasped is a substantive rightness of his opinion, so that we can be at one with each other on the subject. (p. 387)

Such is one form of a rhetorical turn away from persuasion to a hermeneutical turn toward prejudice. Thus, the linkages between rhetoric and prejudice *a la* Gadamer is the expansion of enthymematic horizons that interanimate to constitute meaning making not from a tyrannical imposition of meaning, but from a relational negotiation of what I call lived provincality.

Rhetoric understood as otherwise than persuasion brings a lived provincality, the tainted ground of the different other into *poiesis*. As *poiesis*, rhetoric *brings forth* prejudice as the foundation our everydayness (Heidegger, 1971). Underlying *poiesis* is grounded conviction, which could be articulated as phenomenologically constitutive play. As Donna Trueit (2005) asserts, through her reading of Gadamer, “play is the action of poiesis (*creating*) involved in *doing* and *becoming*” (p. 89; emphasis original). In other words, play is an enthymematically responsive encounter that discloses fundamental bias as interpretative standpoints and positions in human conversation. As Kenneth White (1994) suggests, “conversational play requires the recognition of the role *prejudice* takes in human understanding” (p. 96; emphasis original).

Interpretive standpoints and positions offer opportunities for engaging understanding not as a utopian cooptation of alterity, but as an interpretive response to difference. Play, therefore could be seen as an activated ground of conviction that leads to, and is necessary for, dialogic understanding.

This work situates dialogic understanding within the paradigmatic necessity of prejudice. Intrinsic to the Gadamerian notion of prejudice is a view of that rhetoric is a means for negotiating differing viewpoints. Questioning the Enlightenment proclivity for a rhetoric of compliance which led to the ontological genocide of prejudice—caricatured as prejudice against prejudice, Gadamer argued that understanding requires the engagement of biases. Within the process of engagement is the resolve (an ethical response) “to seek and acknowledge the immanent coherence contained within the meaning claim of the other” (Gadamer, 1987, p. 87). For Gadamer, seeking and acknowledging the bias of the other is a learning process, a learning that exposes our vulnerabilities—human finitude—and the those of others, and might somethings require the “suspension of one’s prejudices.” At other times, it might require standing one’s ground. Gadamer calls this learning process *bildung*, the hermeneutic cultivation of horizons.

Gadamer understood a world in which the cultivation of horizons “suggests listening to, knowing, and encountering the other in such a way as to allow one’s self to be changed but not eradicated ... ” (Barthold, 2010, p. 76). *Bildung*, therefore, conveys the necessity to listening to, knowing, and encountering standpoints contrary to a rhetoric of compliance. As Richard Bernstein (1991) asserts, “[it is] only by seeking to learn from the ‘other,’ only by fully grasping its claims upon one can it be critically encountered” (p. 4). Bernstein addresses the importance of opening oneself to the prejudice of the other. “Such an opening” (p. 143) does not favor compliance, but what I term a rhetoric of enthymematic relationality.

A rhetoric of enthymematic relationality shifts the focus of what Jürgen Habermas (1984) describes as imposed agreement to what Gadamer constitutes as “reciprocal engagement” (Gill, 2015). This work rejects the world of imposed agreement—a rhetoric of compliance—and welcomes a conversation *layered* in an enthymematic rhetoric of relationality. Buber points to the centrality of the rhetoric of relationality in his philosophical anthropology (see Arnett, 2004, pp. 77-80): “In the beginning is relation” (Buber, 1958, p. 18); Levinas addresses the issue of relationality in his phenomenology of ethics (see Lipari, 2012): “I am responsible for the Other” (Levinas, 1985, p. 98). These philosophers frame the dialogic characteristics of enthymematic relationship by placing grounded conviction—not persuasion—at the center of human communication. Prejudice is the primary ingredient of enthymematic relationship.

This work suggests a rhetorical hermeneutics that makes prejudice a locus of dialogic ethics. The focus on prejudice is a response to the postmodern quest for attentive learning from and listening to difference. The relevance of prejudice in postmodernity is a rhetoric of relationality, a communicative praxis central to dialogic ethics. As Arnett (2011b) suggests, the “interplay” of “communication ethic and dialogue standpoints” is a confessional response to the signs of the time (p. 45).

Prejudice and Dialogic Communication Ethics

Arnett’s definition of communication ethics “as dialogue among differing perspectives (2011b, p. 47) frames the necessity of prejudice within the sphere of dialogic engagement. Aristotle (1985) was cautious of monologic extremism, the danger that led to the dogmatically repressive ontology and epistemology of the Enlightenment and modern projects. Postmodernity, on the other hand, celebrates a layered understanding of ethics that is not dismissive of

methodological truth, but engages a complexity of truths as rhetorically constructive standpoints in communicative praxis. As Arnett argued, the interplay of prejudice and communication ethics resonates Arendt's notion of "enlarged mentality," an attentive responsiveness (Levinas, 1969) to differing narratives, a feature of postmodernity. Such an interplay focuses on tensional narratives that detour from the conventional endorsement of truth.

This work bleeds fundamental prejudice into layered perspectives that "background" and "foreground" (Arnett, 2011b, p. 46) dialogue, disclosing "habit of the heart" (Bellah, Madsen, Swidler, Sullivan, & Tipton, 1985) as the contextual ground of ethical encounters. Scholars of dialogue—Gadamer, Buber, and Levinas—understood ethical encounters as communicative commitment to difference and alterity. Dialogic communication ethics emphasizes difference and alterity. Tullio Maranhao (1990) writes that one approach to *dialogic communication ethics* rests within relationality; that is, "the relation between Self and Other ... in the sense of the Self's turning to the Other" (p. 18). It is a "turning to" that is comprised of, according to Arnett, Arneson and Bell (2006), competing narratives. They argue that "The emergence of dialogic ethics in the postmodern era represents the significance of communication ethics in negotiating competing" narratives (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 166).

Competing narratives, a paradigmatic necessity before us, are reminders of the dangers of master narratives and the proclivity to epistemological profiling that nourishes control and progress. This position is precisely Arnett's (2011b) contention "that one cannot stand above history and offer an opinion through objectivity or through self-proclaimed confidence from one's subjectivity" (p. 46). This work acknowledges the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethics neither begins in objectivity nor in the commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that shapes the conversation and its conventional patterns. This work

also seeks to elaborate upon the contributions of dialogic communications ethics to a rhetorical understanding of prejudice. Finally, this work argues that there is need for a turn toward the notion of prejudice in the postmodern era. Prejudice is the originary home of competing narratives, and renders the alterity of the Other an ethical *poiesis*.

Ethical *poiesis* invites a turning toward that can only be made relevant through the interanimation of standpoints, an emphasis prevalent in postmodern theorizing in communication ethics. Makau and Arnett's (1997) vision of communication ethics, for example, call for engaging standpoints by living "openly and responsibly with the dialectical tension inherent in commonality and difference" (p. x). For this opening to standpoints also happens to be the Levinasian ethics of polymodality, which, according to Lipari (2012), constitutes communication ethics as an attentive response to "plurality, exteriority, and alterity over unity, interiority, and ontology" (p. 228). In its most fundamental sense, however, communication ethics invites a "polemical unity" (Bonhoeffer, 1955; see Arnett, 2005, p. 215) of standpoints. Such a position has flowed throughout the history of communication, with postmodern ethics calling for an Arendtian enlarged mentality with a Ricoeurian suspicion of what constitutes prejudice.

Conventional treatment of prejudice framed the concept in monological terms, suspicious of individuality. Postmodernity, on the other hand, was suspicious of psychologism, and more in line with Ricoeur's (1992) ethics of intentionality, which he defined as "aiming at the 'good life' with and for others, in" communities of memory (p. 172; see Cohen, 2002, p. 128). The good life assumes a dialogic implicature and a phenomenological turn toward the Other. Between the "good life" and the Other, to paraphrase Arnett (2008b), is the "tainted ground." Ground assumes multiple goods, reminding us of the necessity to open ourselves to the obvious yet unfathomable prejudices before us (R. Arnett, 2012b).

Communication ethics typify postmodernity's response to difference as the fundamental prejudice that is otherwise than convention, opening relationships to the reality of lived provincialities. In the metaphors of Arendt, an "enlarged mentality" and "plurality of publics" (Arendt, 1998) articulate the embeddedness of prejudice as a communicative necessity. Arendt reminds us of the consummate nature of prejudice and the prevarications of totalitarian ethics that undermine difference, demanding conformity and obliterating lived provincialities. Postmodern ethics recognizes the importance of an enlarged mentality and plurality of publics, metaphors that "background" and "foreground" (Arnett, 2011b, p. 46) communication ethics as a plurality of ethics. We live in era of competing narratives and contending goods, and attempts to offer a universal ethic as THE RESPONSE to these diverse problematics is phenomenologically presumptuous. Jeffrey Stout in *Ethics After Babel* (1988), using the metaphor of "bricolage," called for a "stereoscopic" response to the densely packed understanding of the ethical complexity of the signs of the time. Stout argued that the refusal to permit, invite, and acknowledge difference and diversity creates "a false sense of unity," foster "harmful stereotypes of the 'other,'" creating a self-absorbed ontological monster (p. 5).

This work acknowledges the metaphor of bricolage, an acknowledgement of "a perfect Babel of confusion" (Stout, 1988, p. 333), calling into question rhetorical attempts to bring an ethical closure to difference. The signs of the time offer the necessity of disclosures, and point to how disclosures constitute narrative grounds, making the notion of prejudice—tainted ground, grounded conviction, bias ground, or lived provincialities "come of age" (Arnett, 2005). Attending to the disclosures of ethical standpoints is central to communication ethics. The scholarship of James Chesbro (1969), Richard Johannesen (1983; 2001) Ronald Arnett (1987; 2001), James Jaksas and Michael Pritchard (1988), Josina Makau and Ronald Arnett (1997),

Clifford Christians (2003), Brent Ruben and Lea Stewart (2005), Michael Hyde (2001), and Ronald Arnett, Pat Arneson, LeeAnne Bell (2006)—according to Arnett (2011b)—point to the significance of the ethical bricolage of common sense before us.

Key to the metaphor of bricolage is the question of response—an ethical otherwise than a dogmatic response. The latter guides this project because prejudice (tainted ground), the phenomenological embeddedness of difference calls for interrogating the dogmatic assumptions of modernity that the tainted ground is an epiphenomenon or a byproduct of methodic inconsistency. Aspirations for methodic consistency often takes as its ground rule the dogmatic profiling derisively described as “the prejudice against prejudice” (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 273). Prejudice construed as such, becomes the language of universal generality when, as Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007b) argued, “narrative awareness of traditions that shape consciousness is lost, leaving them forgotten or taken for granted” (p. 118). Relevant to dialogic communication ethics is how prejudice is constituted in the realm of narrative awareness.

The work of James Chesebro (1969) points to the necessity of narrative awareness, possibilitizing a plurality of responses that “promote and protect a given sense of the ‘good’” (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 56). To Chesebro, narrative awareness assumes interpretive standpoints in communication ethics. Chesebro outlined four interpretive standpoints—(1) democratic ethics, (2) universal-humanitarian ethics, (3) codes and procedures, and standards, (4) contextual ethics—which he considered important to communicative ethics praxis (Arnett et al., 2009, pp. 44-60). These categories have since been extended and added on to. Arnett (1987) forged a fifth conceptual framework of ethics, narrative ethics; and Arnett, Arneson, and Bell (2006) classified a sixth category, dialogic communication ethics. These six framework are “central for navigating a postmodern era” of narrative and virtue contention (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 155).

According to Arnett (1987), democratic ethics derive from “a public ‘process’ ethic, an open airing of opinions and control by majority vote” (p. 46; see Arnett et al., 2009, p. 46). The “‘public’ process” is anchored by mass totality and a conscientious commitment to consensus. This perspective, as Robert Nozick (1981) argued, “set[s] up reverberations in the brain: if the person refused to accept the” status quo, “[s]he dies” (p. 4). For Nozick and Arnett the interplay of democracy and ethics is neither a phlegmatic response to tradition nor what Bernard Williams (1985) would call a “superpower view of defense” aimed at obliterating difference (p. 84); instead, it is a communicative participation that breeds individuality from the standpoint of “humans as persons” who “can be talked with.” After all, “only persons can engage in mutual responsive communication” (Johannesen, 2002, p. 63). Democratic ethics privileges a mutuality that is otherwise than an enthymematic compliance—roots of totalitarianism and the tyranny of individualism. Democratic ethics has kinship with Buber’s notion of “unity of contraries” under conditions of what this project considers communicative bricolage. Alexis de Tocqueville work, *Democracy in America* (1969), point to the importance of democratic ethics. Communication situated within democratic ethics provides a sense of embeddedness and situatedness, “habits of the hearts” that keep fundamental prejudice vibrant in the postmodern community of memory (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 37).

Universal-humanitarian ethics hosts the Enlightenment commitment to methodic rationality as the guiding principle of every communicative behavior (Arnett, 1987, p. 48). The guiding principle, often championed by a “select intelligentsia” and framed as a “public announcement” (p. 48) embraces the Kantian notion of a priori universals. “Kant advises us to consider the wisdom of a given ethical principle by asking, ‘Can this principle be universalized such that it would make sense for human life?’” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 49). Universal-

humanitarian ethics require a rational discernment process which brings the universal and the singular into a *bricolage of common sense* in a given narrative context.

In a way, Levinas' notion of ethical responsiveness as meeting the radical alterity of the Other gives currency to the notion of universal-humanitarian ethics in the postmodern era. In the *Ethics and Infinity* (1985), Levinas argued that "It is banal to say that we never exist in the singular. We are surrounded by beings and with things with which we maintain relations. Through sight, touch, sympathy and common work, we are *with* others" (p. 58). Universal-humanitarian ethics acknowledges the inevitability of "touchstones" through a sense of communality that is sympathetic to singularity. As Christians (2008) said, "We embrace an Other with deep sympathy, and simultaneously universalize impartiality—wishing conceptually that the whole human race were like the Other, and defining the Other as the universal ideal" (p. 17). The interplay of communality and singularity define human communicative relationships and behaviors as "humanizing *topoi* that lead one to reason on behalf of the 'good'" (Arnett et al., 2007a, p. 158).

Codes, procedure and standard ethics are publicly disclosed prescriptions of what constitutes an ethical behavior in organizations. The codes, procedures, and standards ethics rely on professional guidelines for directing and enforcing a "common agreement on appropriate conduct" within professional groups or organizations (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 50). According to Arnett (1987), the professional guidelines—handmaid of a select intelligentsia—are purposive goods aimed at promoting discussions (pp. 50-51) about the public "ought" of a given organization: "... codes and standards are formed through repeated conversation[s] ... provide communicative guidance and assurance for the participants ... enhance a communicative terrain of trust ... responsive to persons and a given organization ... and a given context (see Arnett et

al., 2007a, p. 160). Arnett, Fritz, and Bell (2009) cite the work of Kenneth Andersen on the public expectations of academic communication professionals as an exemplar of the communication ethic that derives from codes, procedures, and standards:

Andersen was instrumental in the development of the National Communication Association (NCA) Codes of Professional Responsibility for the Communication Scholar/Teacher. The NCA Code ... includes statements such as the following “...We believe that responsible behavior is guided by values such as integrity, fairness, professional and social responsibility, equality of opportunity, confidentiality, honesty and openness, respect for self and others, freedom and honesty” (p. 50)

As Johannesen (2002) suggests, codes, procedures, and standards organize and provide a communication ethic situated within the “useful functions” which “stimulate continued discussion and reflection leading to possible modification or revision” of public regulated professional conduct (p. 183). The useful characters move conducts from narcissistic adherence to “the ‘strict’ letter of the code” to “the ‘spirit’ of the code” (p. 185). It is the public proclamation and adherence to the spirit of the codes and standards of a professional organization that drive and shape an ethical responsiveness to the signs of the time.

Contextual ethics embraces difference and multiplicity as a communicative response to particularity of standpoints. As Chesebro (1997) sees it, standpoints “make us consider our established and habitual symbol-using practices” (p. 145; cited in Arnett, Fritz, and Bell, 2009, p. xviii). Communication ethics is energized by these same “symbol-using practices” not as a monologic demand, but as a dialogic invitation to engage plurality with “a pragmatic hope” that attentiveness to radical alterity broadens horizons, authenticates the self as a derivative I, and

confesses to taking false comfort in *isms* and generalizations. From this perspective, as Johannesen suggests, communication ethics is neither a prescriptive nor an absolute response to human behavior, but rather a context driven response to a given good. A communication ethics framed within the contextual approach point to the “communicative ‘ought’” as “listening to the needs of a given context before offering ethical response. The ‘good’ that is protected is attentiveness to” (Arnett et al., 2007a, p. 162) particularities not generalities.

Narrative ethics “recognizes the story-laden nature of human experience, framing guidelines appropriate to ‘character’ in a given story” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 53). This assertion endorses Walter Fisher’s commitment to the notion of “narrative paradigm for human communication” (p. 52) over a utopian paradigm of rationality. In his foreword to Arnett’s *Dialogic Confession*, Christians argued,

Narrative ethics has turned the ethics of rationalism on its head. It has contradicted the metaphysical foundations on which the modernist canon has been based. It has worked from the inside out, from the backyard and grass roots. Social constructions have replaced formal law systems. Moral values are now situated in the narrative context rather than anchored by philosophical abstractions. The moral life is developed through community formation and not in obscure sanctums of isolated individuals. Contextual values have replaced ethical absolutes. (Arnett, 2005, p. xi)

Arnett, drawing upon Fisher and MacIntyre, returns to the notion of narrative ethics repeatedly (Arnett, 1986, 1997, 2011a), inviting us to view its complexity with humility, a humility that embraces fundamental prejudice as an embodiment of human communicative experience: narrative or story “places ground under one’s feet without embracing an inflexible ideology”

(Arnett, 2005, p. 28). Ground remind us of the necessity of “narrative bias that situates an ethic” (Arnett et al., 2007a, p. 169). Narrative ethics takes a communicative look at prejudice by taking us from the originative assumption that epistemology is the first principle of human communicative behavior to drawing upon the plurality of narrative frames as a primordial ground of dialogic ethics.

Narrative ethics connects prejudice with “a story of conviction that places ground under one’s feet without embracing an inflexible ideology” (Arnett, 2005, p. 28), suggesting “petite narratives” (Lyotard, 1984) as the inevitable “good” before us. Such is the reason Lyotard was wary of the totalizing feature of modernity, grand narratives (p. 82). Petite narratives assume attentive listening to “a multiple collage that enriches our life together” (Arnett, 2005, p. xii). Narrative ethics invites awareness to layered story frames that do not begin with universal validity, but with the biased ground “upon which we stand” in every dialogic encounter (see Arnett et al., 2009).

Narrative ethics presumes prejudice. Such is the interpretive otherwise of Buber and the listening otherwise of Levinas. Buber and Levinas worked with the assumption that narrative bias informs the anthropological and the phenomenological reality of difference. Both Buber and Levinas remind us of the efficacy of what Gadamer calls “effective history”—a consciousness of the inevitability of the bias narrative that “background” and “foreground” (Arnett, 2011b) the “everydayness” (Heidegger, 1962) of a community of memory.

Dialogic ethics assumes a public welcome of competing narratives and virtue contention. In the words of words of Arnett, Fritz, and Bell (2009), postmodernity is marked by fragmented viewpoints. As such, it “calls to learn about and negotiate” differing viewpoints, bringing us to linking communicative ethical responses that privilege learning from difference rather telling,

dictating, and demanding commonality (p. xviii). Learning from difference requires “standing” our “own grounds while being open to the” standpoints of others, “conceptualizing meaning that emerges in discourse situated *between* persons” (Arnett et al., 2007a, p. 164; emphasis added). The Buberian metaphor of “between” begets discovering new possibilities emergent in difference.

Difference is central to dialogic ethics. It calls for the constructive engagement of “unity of contraries” (Arnett, 2011b, p. 59). Dialogic ethics involves a public admission of unity of contraries through a confessional recognition of radical alterity. Lipari (2004) underscores the importance of dialogic ethics when she questioned monologic encounters that exert control in the spirit of a therapeutic sense of self. In her words, dialogic ethics “avoids reducing recognition of the other to a kind of mimetic re-cognition of the other in which we view the other solely in terms of our precognitions and thus assimilate them into what we already know (or think we know) about their point of view. Rather, communication is a process of opening to the other” (pp. 130-131). The process of opening to the other is an “epistemological humility” (Makau, 2011, p. 503) *come of age*, a notion foreshadowed by Ronald Jackson’s (2000) assertion: “It is impossible to ... approach a complete version of reality that is fully representative of all human and cultural activities” (p. 49; cited in Arnett, Fritz, and Bell, 2009, p. xi). The insights of Lipari, Makau, and Jackson assume the need to engage competing or multiple narratives, paving the way for attentive listening. It is this understanding of dialogic ethics that *enables the pursuit of happiness otherwise than the pursuit of authorial progress*.

These various ethics of communication—democratic, universal-communitarian, codes, procedures, and standards, contextual, narrative, and dialogic ethics—are interpretive standpoints, rhetorical sense-making choice that require attentive listening and learning from

narratives that frame the phenomenological-ethical conviction of situated and embedded otherness. This attentiveness speaks to the value and necessity of prejudice. This work advances dialogic communication ethics by framing the notion of prejudice within a history of the problematic term, prejudice with the objective of displaying the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethic begins neither in objectivity nor in commonality itself, but in the very ground of prejudice that shape the conversation and its conventional patterns. This work unmasks the past assumption that prejudice can and should always be eradicated, a thinking that falls prey to the modernist assumptions hostile to the existential reality reflected in Buber's insight that "All real living is in meeting" (Buber, 1958, p. 11).

The main purpose of this work is to contribute to a richer and more systematic conceptual understanding of prejudice in dialogic communication ethics. This work further intends to provide a framework that integrates a wide range of prejudice from the historical perspective. To demonstrate the relevancy of this connection, I provide a historical analysis of the concept of prejudice from the classical period (Aristotle), early Christianity (Paul), Renaissance (Shakespeare), modern era (Kierkegaard) and the postmodern (Levinas). Through the history of the notion of prejudice, the rhetoric of prejudice is explored from the perspective of dialogic communication ethics.

Preview of Chapters

This work will proceed through a historical analysis of the concept of prejudice from the classical period (Aristotle), early Christianity (Paul), Renaissance (Shakespeare), modern era (Kierkegaard) and the postmodern era (Levinas). Through the history of the notion of prejudice, the rhetoric of prejudice is explored from the perspective of dialogic communication ethics.

Although my concern is the rhetorical implication of the concept of prejudice, my emphasis upon ethics is intended to reveal dialogue as pragmatic aspect of communication ethics necessary to the rhetorical nature of prejudice in post modernity. In next chapter (chapter two), I discuss the dialogic elements of Aristotle's theory of rhetorical discourse, looking specifically at the nature of the enthymeme as it relates to subjective universality as a dialogic concept. The rest of the chapter describes the uniqueness of subjective universality as *episteme*, *technê*, and *phronesis*. The interplay of these Aristotelian elements speaks to the value and necessity of prejudice as the ground upon which we stand in every dialogic encounter.

In chapter three, following the Pauline notion of universalism, I argue that a rhetorical conception of prejudice constitutes varied *locative truths* that link up provincially to adumbrate universal singularity. Universalism through the lenses of prejudice reflects difference as rhetorical modes of subtracting and/or grafting self-reflexivity, individual accounts of inquiry from/on common sense and tradition. In Paul, universalism nurtured as the tainted ground bears witness to the Christ event as constitutive of a contextual phenomenological reality which privileges the negotiation of multiple traditions. In other words, the notion of truth is a subjective process of faithfulness to the Christ event.

Chapter four discusses Shakespeare's epistemological suspicion as a communicative problematic that rest on the assumption that the tainted ground—human imperfectibility—"must be offered in a coherent and public fashion, pointing toward a theory and away from self-proclamation" (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 114). This chapter offers a fine-grained analysis of the problematic—epistemological suspicion at the intersection of prejudice and dialogic communication ethics. I situate the problematic in the context of sixteenth century English Renaissance epistemological skepticism, an epoch that anatomized the operation of reason and

endorsed the epistemological pretention of an absolute foundation, a background that immensely influenced Shakespeare's doubt of human perfectibility.

Chapter five situates the ongoing problematic of prejudice in the context of modernity's prejudice against individuality by coining and employing the metaphor "irony" and the "ethical single individual" from the philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard to substantiate the relevancy of the fundamental prejudice. Kierkegaard saw the existential presuppositions of modernity as symptoms of a deeper, historically and culturally rooted misunderstanding of individuality. This chapter argues for a Kierkegaardian conception of the self as derivative and ethical that realizes itself by standing its ground through irony.

Chapter six provides an explanation of how Levinas's *a priori ethics* articulates the call to attend to the face of the Other by focusing on his claim that ethics is "first philosophy" prior to ontology or epistemology. Following this, the chapter explores the relationship between ethics and Otherness: one's relations with the Other in relation to a multiplicity of biases. The chapter contributes to the ongoing scholarship on the necessity of prejudice as the ground on which we stand, outlining Levinas's ethics of responsibility and its connection to the radically different biased ground of the Other. In Levinas, we see the biased ground not as a mere subjective ground, but charged with an ethical relation, the responsibility to respond to the Other—an engagement with the Other—that places ethics as the primary philosophical category that precedes the self.

Finally, chapter seven—the concluding section—frames prejudice as postmodern dialogic communicative necessity that calls for and welcomes the tainted ground upon which one stands. I will end with a series of general conclusions from the work, explaining how these conclusions bring to light the ongoing assertion there are multiple ethics, each grounded upon a

fundamental bias, and how my inquiry fits into the general body of philosophical assumption that the problematic nature of the concept of prejudice offers a privilege place for attentive listening and learning from difference.

Significance of Work to the Discipline of Communication

In era marked by a plurality of narratives, the notion of prejudice offers richness to dialogic communication ethics, bidding farewell to unreflective allegiance to common sense. Arnett, Fritz and Bell (2009) implied this when they referred to the work Gadamer “who reminds us of the importance of the bias in human communication and learning. Dialogue begins with difference” (p. 23). Difference exemplifies the inevitability of prejudice. The dialogic nature of prejudice holds the potential to address the notion that “ dialogue begins with the “desire to learn from the Other through engagement of difference” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 95). The dialogic nature of prejudice reveals prospects within dialogic communication ethics with transformative potentials, which include the possibility to work with competing narratives and virtue structures that inform any discussion of human communication.

The transformative potentials and its proclivity to attentiveness to competing narratives suggests a hermeneutic of understanding reminiscent of Gadamer’ (1987) call “to seek and acknowledge the immanent coherence contained within the meaning claim of the other” (p. 87). A hermeneutic of understanding suggests fundamental prejudice, a narrative standpoint whence one interacts with others. The interaction involves an epistemological humility: we cannot “stand above the historical moment of engagement and cast judgment” (Arnett et al., 2007b, p. 115); rather, we are called to bear witness to the historical moment by owning up to our own fallibilities and the vulnerabilities of others, however radically different. It is within

epistemological humility that prejudice emerges directly or indirectly as an unavoidable communicative praxis that is *ever* listening, attending and learning from to particularity of the other. Such is the reason for this work.

Summary

This introduction offers the inevitability of prejudice in dialogic communication ethics in the postmodern era, calling for a paradigmatic move away from the universal assurances of homogeneity, monolithic impositions, and despotic ideologies to “narrative conviction” as the dialogic home for engaging Otherness. This work assumes that prejudice propels the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethics begins neither in objectivity nor in commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that frames the conversation and its conventional patterns. Finally, prejudice calls for walking the concept through its various historical periods as well as exploring its necessity from the viewpoint of dialogic communication ethics.

CHAPTER TWO—Dialogic Judgment: Subjective Universality

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle shows how judgment involves perception, evaluation and decision making. In using the term “judgment” as rhetorically synonymous with perception, discernment, and insight, Aristotle’s conception of judgment underscores the essence of subjective universality. In other words, our worldviews are conditioned by contexts where judgment is rendered according to tacit, personal subjectivities—I call them *endoxic premises*—that foreground human communicative praxis.

The thrust of this chapter is that Aristotle held “subjective universality” as a state of judgment. Aristotle identifies five states of judgment: *technê* (art/craft), *episteme* (knowledge/scientific knowledge), *phronesis* (practical wisdom/prudence), *sophia* (philosophic wisdom), and *nous* (comprehension/understanding). These states of judgment—Aristotle calls them “states of the soul”—are epistemological discernment processes “in which the soul possesses truth by way of affirmation or denial” (1984, 1139b15; p. 1799). In this chapter, I call Aristotle’s states of judgment “subjective universality” because they inform “narrative conviction” (Arnett, 2005). For purposes of this study, I will restrict my analysis of subjective universality to the enthymeme—though not mentioned as one of the states of judgment in Aristotle’s works—*episteme*, *technê* and *phronesis*. The metaphor “subjective universality” hinges on an attentiveness that supersedes the normative. This extra-normative sense of communicative competence expresses a practical dialogic wisdom that is cultivated both individually and communally, emphasizing the need move from conventional thinking per say to the ethical aim of “dialogic engagement” open to the negotiation of meanings (see Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 298).

Subjective universality has many implications for dialogic communication ethics. First, it allows us to make a connection between what Aristotle calls “states of the soul” with dialogic engagement. Using the work of Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede (1984), John Gage (1984), Gregory Clark (1990), Richard Enos and Janice Lauer (1992), and Thomas Farrell (1993), I argue that the dialogic component of subjective universality is enthymematic understanding. These essays create a sense of reflective coexistence of difference—multiple subjectivities—in rhetorical discourse by way of the enthymeme. The enthymeme seems to be a carry-over of the notion of subjective universality into the communicative world, which I believe cashes out in terms of prejudice as ground on which one stands. The desired result of this discussion is a more thorough sense of what dialogic judgment and subjective universality mean given the problems of prejudice in communication ethics.

I begin the chapter by discussing the dialogic elements of Aristotle’s theory of rhetorical discourse, looking specifically at the nature of the enthymeme as it relates to subjective universality as a dialogic concept. The rest of the chapter describes the uniqueness of subjective universality as *episteme*, *technê*, and *phronesis* for establishing the ground of one’s bias in every dialogic encounter. I begin with the enthymeme. The concept is used in this chapter to mean the co-creation of meaning between rhetor and audience. The enthymeme encourages genuine dialogue in which rhetors and audience persuade themselves of their individual biases or subjective universalities while remaining open to the truth of the other. In the section on judgment and enthymematic dialogism, the enthymeme will be introduced as an ethics that privilege the dialogic engagement of subjective universality. This discussion reveals the dialogic nature of the enthymeme, questioning the assumption that common values are incapable of being multivocal. The second part of this chapter explores the immediate goals of subjective

universality in the context of relationship between prejudice and judgment. Third, is the treatment of subjective universality as a craft and wisdom applied to and made manifest in communicative action. Last, are the implications of a dialogic understanding of subjective universality: narrative contention emphasizes difference; subjective universality propels genuine dialogue; and subjective universality privileges a movement toward dialogic engagement of the self and other.

Judgment and Enthymematic Dialogism

The urge to elevate the dialogic elements of Aristotle's theory of rhetorical discourse have been advanced by Lunsford and Ede (1984), Gage (1984), Clark (1990), Enos and Lauer (1992), and Farrell (1993). They maintain that Aristotle's understanding of the rhetorical discourse is dialogic. Lunsford and Ede (1984) argued that Aristotle's rhetorical discourse privileges a rhetor-audience relationship (p. 44). Central to this relationship is the role of language in the creation of knowledge and belief and its relationship to subjective universality. Aristotle viewed language as the medium through which judgment about the world is communicated; he situates judgment within convention and reflective participation.

Gage (1984), advances the viewpoint of Lunsford and Ede by adding a dialogic component to the Aristotle's theory of rhetorical discourse. Aristotle's rhetoric, Gage argued is "an exchange of ideas among parties whose mutual goal is the discovery of [probable] knowledge" (p. 155). Dialogue begins in "moment[s] of meaning," (Cissna & Anderson, 2002), moments in which

knowledge can knowledge can considered as something which people *do* together, rather than as something which any one person, outside of discourse,

has... and is likely to bring modification when minds bring new understandings ... carried out in relation to the intentions and reasons of others and necessarily relative to the capacities and limits of human discourse, rather than a *commodity* which is contained in one mind is transferred to another. (Gage, 1984, p. 156).

Gage's conception of Aristotle's rhetorical discourse is akin to the postmodern epistemological assumption that genuine dialogue is a "moment where meaning and relation merge into some new form of engagement" (Poulos, 2008, p. 117). Whedbee (1998) located the new form of engagement in "'endoxic' premises that legitimately inform and initiate deliberation" (p. 172). This dissertation adds that the dialogic engagement is an epistemic activity which connects prejudice with discourse to co-create meaning. The implication is that Aristotle understands the relationship between parties to rhetorical discourse as dialogic.

Like Gage, Clark (1990) addressed the epistemic and dialogic dimensions of Aristotle's rhetorical discourse. Epistemologically, rhetorical discourse constitutes reality. Dialogically, rhetorical discourse is a "negotiative exchange" (p. 28). The negotiative exchange component of rhetorical discourse "is a cooperative endeavor sustained upon a foundation of shared meanings for the purpose of establishing further shared meanings that will support further cooperation and, thus, further" dialogue (p. 37).

Shared meanings involve the cumulative weight of common sense and the inevitable, yet uncertain fact of otherness. Viewed this way, it is important to offer a public welcome to subjective universality as a *prior* construction of a situated ethical self in any rhetorical discourse. This is because rhetorical discourse transcends common sense; it is a rhetorical platform that involves "civility" emanating from "the tainted ground" Arnett (Arnett & Arneson, 1999; Arnett, McKendree, Fritz, & Roberts, 2008). As such, the Aristotelian meaning making or shared

meaning process provides a space for multiple expressed positions to encounter one another. In its most developed conditions, rhetorical discourse is laden with biases for co-creating discourse. Arendt (1961) provides us with a postmodern rendition of the role of subjective universality in discourse in the Aristotelian sense when she reminds us that “an enlarged mentality presupposes [the] ability to reverse perspectives, to see from another’s position, permitting” the implementation of “a given universal” in the gathering of “more and more particular understanding” (Arnett, 2007a, p. 70). This is another way of saying that a sense of the situated or autonomous ethical self and its accompanying prejudice or tainted ground emerges whenever there is the potential for dialogue. It is one reason why, in principle, rhetorical prejudice may never irrevocably be dismissed.

Enos and Lauer (1992) argued that epistemic rhetoric, when viewed from Aristotle’s understanding of heuristic (invention), is dialogic. They claimed that Aristotle viewed heuristic “as creating meaning within the rhetor and co-creating meaning within the audience” (p. 80). The work of Enos and Lauer, from the standpoint of this study, implies the emergence of subjective universality, in all of its plurality, “initiate[s] dialogue in tensional exigencies whose urgency and saliency are reciprocally enacted” (p. 83). However, I would add that from a postmodern stance, prejudice is an epistemic invention which propels dialogue.

Finally, Farrell’s *Practicing the Arts of Rhetoric* (1999) claims that Aristotle understands rhetorical discourse as an epistemic *praxis*: “Aristotle ... says ... is to *practice* judgment ... and achieves its aims in ways that allow virtually anyone to participate effectively within the practice itself” (p. 81). For Farrell, rhetoric commands discourse, and so rhetorical discourse is, in a sense, primarily dialogic. Farrell argued that rhetorical practice is relational because “it requires another person in order to be practiced and thereby cultivated” (p. 81). Within the act of practice

are the elements of reciprocity and collaboration, important “inventional capacity” with “responsive interested *others*” (p. 81). Farrell’s point of view offers a public welcome of a dialogic rhetoric otherwise than a rhetoric of domination and control. Rhetorical practice is not an authoritarian, rhetor-centered, monolithic imposition. Instead it is a dialogic engagement of plurality of activities and reflective judgment. This may be another way of saying that propriety is always possessed of both differences and particulars.

The works of Lunsford and Ede, Gage, Clark, Enos and Lauer, and Farrell underscore the postmodern assumptions that Aristotelian rhetorical discourse privileges the co-creation of meanings between rhetor and audience. In the presence of this prevailing argument, what can be offered as the basis for the claim that subjective universality is vital in every dialogic communication, *a la* Aristotle’s conception of rhetorical discourse?

Implicit in the above question is the role of the enthymeme, in rhetorical discourse. Arthur Walzer (1997) says the enthymemes are “common cultural beliefs which the audience accepts,” and are framed “within the context of the general views of the audience” (p. 48). Walter adds that the audience is a passive participant in the rhetorical discourse, thus questioning the dialogic nature of Aristotle’s rhetoric. This study, on the hand, draws upon Lloyd Bitzer (1959) and William Grimaldi (1972) and to make the claim that enthymemes are the rhetorical markers that direct the co-creation of meaning or shared meanings a priori to dialogic rhetoric in Aristotle. The enthymemes are a dialogic embodiment of negotiative other-centered praxis which Bitzer sees as “syllogism based on probabilities, signs, and examples, whose function is rhetorical persuasion. Its successful construction is accomplished through the joint efforts of speaker and audience, and this is its essential character” (p. 408). Grimaldi describes the enthymeme “the confrontation of speaker and audience” (p. 58). The assertions of Grimaldi and

Bitzer describe the dialogic nature of the enthymeme. In other words, the enthymeme is an embodiment of discursive thinking. The enthymeme, according to my understanding, encourages “the importance of localities,” (Roberts, 2008), attentiveness to unique potentialities (Arnett, 2007b) or listening to subjective universality while remaining open to the provincial, situated meaning of others.

The dialogic nature of Aristotle’s rhetorical discourse, as intimated earlier, is otherwise than monologic imposition. In communication ethics, dialogic discourse can mean anything from the face-to-face negotiation of difference to questioning monologic impositions (Hammond, Anderson, & Cissna, 2003). Gadamer’s classification of dialogue as authentic or inauthentic further clarifies this point. In *Truth and Method* (1975/1989), Gadamer describes dialogue as a communicative act that we “fall into” (p. 385) and as a result come “to an understanding”:

it belongs to every true conversation that each person himself to the other, truly accepts his points of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. What is to be grasped is the substantive rightness of his opinion, so that we can be at one with each other on the subject. Thus we do not relate to the other’s opinion to him but to our own opinions and views. (p. 387)

Gadamer’s statement here reinforces his distinguishing between two types of dialogue—authentic and inauthentic. Authentic dialogue embodies “listening to what the other has to say.” Inauthentic dialogue involves “being right, with ‘winning’” (Mangion, 2011, p. 168). Thus the enthymeme as a rhetorical discourse is genuinely dialogic because it requires engaging differing perspectives in ways that allow them to make their “own meaning heard” (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 304). Furthermore, rhetorical discourse stresses unique potentialities. This is evident in the

nature of the enthymeme—relationship between rhetor and audience—upon which meaning is co-created or shared. I call this process enthymematic understanding.

This study specifies a definition of dialogic discourse and applies it to discussions on Aristotle's enthymeme. Dialogic discourse identifies those dialogues that maintain engagement as a search for reciprocity without sacrificing difference or disregarding "provinciality." Descriptions of discourse as dialogic generally emphasize difference, multiplicity, or otherness. Amit Pinchevski (2005) asserts that dialogic discourse rests in the "concern for the Other" (p. 73). The idea that Aristotle's enthymeme is dialogic, that is, "concern is expressed in communicating the approaches, addresses, and the contacts of the Other in order to signify difference from what has been said—which is to say, in order to relate to the Other on the basis of difference, rather than sameness; of dissensus, rather than consensus," (Langsdorf, 2008, p. 249) is an important focus. For Gadamer, this concern derives from authentic dialogue: rhetor and audience are bound by an "ethical relationship" which involves accountability to and from each other in dialogic conversation (Vilhauer, 2010, p. 100).

The values that give subjective universality its ethical force in dialogic rhetoric derives from Aristotle. There is, for example, the value of subjectivity in universality. In dialogic rhetoric, subjectivity—the tainted ground—is not co-opted or manipulated. Dialogic rhetoric from this perspective views subjective universality ideally as negotiative exchange between a rhetor and audience without disregarding the *subjective-endoxic* ground of each other. The relationship of this view of dialogue to prejudice is obvious.

This study expands upon Aristotle's notion of rhetorical discourse to contend that individual subjective universality is an embodiment of biases which give texture and content to dialogue. In the context of dialogic ethics, discourse *a la* Aristotle, then, welcomes prejudice as

an ethical necessity in a dialogic conversation rather than an epistemic goal which favors unconditional certainty of knowledge and truth propelled through dogmatic imposition. Aristotle would probably view subjective universality as a concatenation of biases within the *telos* of a *polis*. This conclusion presumes that Aristotle would be committed to the dialogic ideal of an enlarged negotiative exchange and concerned with the co-creation of meaning as enthymematic understanding.

My analysis, so far, outlined the dialogic elements of Aristotle's theory of rhetorical discourse as it relates subjective universality. What makes rhetorical discourse dialogic is the enthymeme, a negotiative exchange between rhetor and audience. Within the framework of the enthymeme, subjective universality flourishes as communicative action tied to the notion of multiple communication ethics that is attentive to otherness. In addition, Aristotle offers rhetorical discourse as a telescopic view of subjective universality, calling forth the rhetorical necessity for communication ethics as laden with bias.

To recap, the enthymeme is a derivative of *epistemic endoxa*—opinions, beliefs, ideology, experiences, and knowledge. The character of the enthymeme places a premium on the *heuristic* platform of the dialogic process because it is the stage where rhetor and audience negotiate and exchange knowledge without disregarding the viewpoint of the other, and finally co-create meaning. The rhetorical necessity of subjective universality foregrounds the enthymeme as dialogic engagement. The emphasis on dialogic engagement supports a communication ethics grounded in situatedness. Unraveling the connection between subjective universality and the enthymeme provides distinctions between certainty and uncertainty, authentic and inauthentic dialogue, and dialogic and monologic notions of judgment and subjectivity.

In the account that follows, the dialogic characteristics of subjective universality will be explored via Aristotle's means of judgment, namely *technê*, *episteme* and *phronesis*. By examining these means of judgment, this study adds to the ongoing conversation about the place of subjective universality in dialogic judgment. The next section treats subjective universality, as an appropriate mode of discourse, and one aimed at reasoned judgment.

Judgment in Episteme Endoxa

The immediate goal of subjective universality is to perceive in a given context those biases that influence the process of judging. This characterization, according to Christopher Johnstone (1980), described Aristotle's rhetoric as "affecting judgment" (p. 6). Following Johnstone's lead, I will argue that subjective universality affects judgment in deliberation, and the assimilation of subjective universality to internal reasoning and dialogue articulates or includes many of the unique characteristics of reasoning and choice making in *episteme*. Stemming from this thrust is the axiom, subjective universality involves knowledge. In other words, subjective universality is knowledge that is constitutive of the world. Knowledge as used here is not objective knowledge but what Michael Polanyi (1958) called "personal knowledge." Polanyi's personal knowledge is analogous to Aristotle's reference to *episteme* as knowledge in general.

In the Aristotelian system, there are two kinds of general knowledge: necessary and contingent. Several scholars have argued that though Aristotle does not make a clear-cut distinction between the two kinds of knowledge, he "establishes the difference between *episteme* and *phronesis* primarily in terms of the object with which each is concerned. The object of *episteme* is necessary ... that of *phronesis*, contingent" (Long, 2004, p. 200). Aristotle attributes

the former to scientific knowledge and the latter to opinions, *endoxa*. In his *Posterior Analytics*, however, Aristotle “attempts to explain how it is possible to have both opinion and knowledge about the same object” (Harari, 2004, p. 57). With Orna Harari, this study engages knowledge and opinion of the world as “affecting judgment”—to use Johnstone’s (1980) term—to coin the metaphor *epistemic-endoxa* as a rhetorical aid key for explaining subjective universality from the perspective of dialogic communication ethics. Furthermore, the metaphor *epistemic-endoxa* is used in this study in the tradition of Martha Nussbaum (1986) as a non-scientific approach to Aristotle’s means of judgment.

For Nussbaum, *epistemic endoxa* are ordinary “beliefs” and “appearances” (*phainomena*) and “openness.” These elements, especially openness, form the “basis of true flexible perception” of the world of ordinary (p. 421) which foreshadows the postmodern assumptions of dialogic ethics as attentive to difference. Nussbaum portrays Aristotle as attentive to the accepted beliefs, values and practices of the time: “Aristotle promises a return from the search for external justification to an *internality* that is deeply rooted in Greek tradition, if at odds with one specifically philosophical tradition” (p. 242). Nussbaum argues that Aristotle’s search for external justification to an *internality* cannot be separated from the notion of subjective universality as the tainted ground—the culturally and historically rooted beliefs—and upon which one stands. However, to grasp the relationship between *epistemic endoxa* and subjective universality, one must take into account Aristotle’s theory of perception.

Nussbaum’s treatment of Aristotle’s theory of perception can be summed up as epistemic ethics. She cites Aristotle—“discrimination lies in perception”—in proposing that perception is about ethical relationship, and involves the recognition of subjectivity as *a priori* to universality (p. 69). Recognition follows from correct perception, and is an “ethical reflection” in “its own

right, embodying” *epistemic endoxa* not as inimical to sound judgment but as subjective universality that fragments common sense (see p. 13). Nussbaum’s analysis is an implicit reference to *epistemic endoxa* as speech act, for perception serves the function of language and meaning:

experiences have in fact been differently constructed by different cultures. In general, first of all, our best accounts of the nature of experience, even perceptual experience, inform us that there is no such thing as an “innocent eye” that receives an uninterpreted “given.” Even sense-perception is interpretative, heavily influenced by belief, teaching, language, and in general by social and contextual features. There is a very real sense in which members of different societies do not see the same sun and stars, encounter the same plants and animals, hear the same thunder. (Nussbaum, 1988, p. 14)

Nussbaum assertion has been corroborated by some scholars of Aristotle, like Irwin (1986), Denyer (1991), Modrak (2001), Haskins (2004), among many. These scholars, apart from making linkages between perception and language, also argued that the linkages “pave[s] the way for a systemic understanding” (Haskins, 2004, p. 4). This work further extends the perception-language-systemic understanding relationship to the metaphor *epistemic endoxa*. Such a hyphenated metaphor situates judgment within both particular and universal principles (Arnett, 2007a, p. 70).

From a postmodernist point of view, *epistemic endoxa* functions as enthymematic dialogism as it corroborates Aristotle’s insistence on acknowledging a multiplicity of opinions. As Most (1994) and Wardy (1996) point out, much has been made of the fact that in his enumeration of the resources of enthymemes, Aristotle doesn’t hasten to rein in the multiplicity

of seemingly arbitrary cultural norms (see Haskins, 2004). The impulse behind this assertion is key. In the dialogic formulation of the enthymeme, the audience is not assumed to univocally assent to a commonsense opinion; rather an audience interpretation of common values is capable of being provincial and unstable. Therefore, what is probable for an audience becomes problematized. It implies that subjective universality gains greater salience because *epistemic endoxa* expressed enthymematically have the potential to elicit different values from an audience.

The main contention of this section is that Aristotle's attention to popular beliefs and expressions as a discursive substratum of judgment is a communicative welcome and respect for culturally situated opinions and the beliefs as well as the ability to acknowledge the truths or viewpoints of the other. Added to Buber's conditions for genuine dialogue, there is a linkage between dialogue and of *epistemic endoxa* in dialogic settings, enriching the idea of subjective universality. Grounding *epistemic endoxa* so thoroughly in opinions or knowledge requires a fitting definition. In this context, *epistemic endoxa* privileges subjective universality. In the next section, I will argue that genuine dialogue and relational good outline identifiable standards for accomplishment in rhetorical discourse and implies an analogy of subjective universality as *technê* and *phronesis*. The idea is consistent with the rhetorical impact of prejudice on dialogic communication ethics, the focus of my study.

Judgement in *Technê* and *Phronesis*

Aristotle defined *technê*—translated as craft or art—as “a state of capacity to make, involving true course of reasoning” (1984, 1140a10; p. 1800). *Technê* has both theoretical and practical aspects. The theoretical aspect is “is closely associated with practical judgment (*sophia*,

gnome), forethought, planning, and prediction” and aimed at precise management of exigencies (Nussbaum, 1986, p. 95). *Technê* requires a combination of insight and dexterity. *Technê* in this sense involves discerning productivity—a true course of reasoning—in the light of excellence and the vice versa. As Aristotle said, “... any action is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the appropriate excellence ... human good turns out to be activity of the soul in conformity with excellence ...” (1984, 1098a14-18; p. 1735). The communicative importance of discerning productivity is framed in Arendt’s *The Human Condition* (1998) as “fabrication”—shaping “material in order to bring about a preconceived end” (Villa, 2001, p. 137). That preconceived end for Aristotle is an active engagement with production intended at some good:

But certain difference is found among ends; some are activities, others are products apart from the activities that produce them. Where there are ends apart from actions, it is the nature of products to be better than the activities ... the end of the medical art is health, that of shipbuilding a vessel, that of strategy victory, that of economics wealth. But where such arts fall under a single capacity ... in all of these the ends of the master arts are to be preferred to all the subordinate ends.

(Aristotle, 1984, 1094a5-10; p. 1729)

Art/craft is about production, a “coming into being” (1140a12-14; p. 1800) and aimed at a good. The craft analogy highlights the ethical aspects of a preconceived end, a good and productive bias. In his book, *Plato’s Craft of Justice* (1996), Richard Parry argues that the craft analogy has two dimensions: “other-regarding” and “self-regarding” (p. 2). The craft analogy privileges the acknowledgment of one’s potentials as well as those of others. For example, a “horse trainer finds something intrinsically valuable about for herself as a horse trainer in exercising her craft, and by doing so she trains a fine horse” (p. 2). This is craft analogy. What is required to pursue

craft dialogically is ethical “maturity” which, according to Parry, involves a craftlike ordering of live “often inspired by ideals” which “have an intrinsic value ... recreated in a craftlike” manner (Parry, 1996, p. 2). Craft, in this sense, is framed within the spirit of productivity and is “situated within” an ethics of responsibility (Arnett, 2005, p. 142). Communicative actions are shaped within the framework of productive and responsible actions ever sensitive and attentive to a given good.

This dissertation understands dialogic ethics to be *technê* or craft with subjective universality as its primordial handiwork. The basic idea is that dialogic ethics as craft, a productive and responsible human discourse, begins with a given good (subjectivity) within the depths of universality. By way of judgment, subjective universality privileges the bias ground by enthymematically shaping communicative actions as ethical relationships within the framework of co-creation of meaning. Enthymematic shaping is just another word for a rhetoric of persuasion. Enthymematic shaping goes beyond passive acquiescence to an active engagement with differing narratives. The active engagement is not a given; it must be co-created in order to allow difference to flourish. Difference emerges in the co-creation of meaning, not in syllogistic imposition.

The notions of enthymematic shaping and co-creation of meaning are placed in one hypostasis; they interanimate to frame the dialogic nature of the enthymeme. By dialogic is meant a rhetorical platform that is open to and engages multiple narratives. To paraphrase Thomas De Quincey (1897), enthymemes derive from and manifest in local narratives (p. 90). From this perspective, it becomes possible to acknowledge narrative bias through a public welcome of plurality “located in the multiple arenas of a *reticulate public sphere* in which” difference is engaged through “*vernacular rhetoric*” (Hauser, 1999, p. 12). If vernacular rhetoric

is considered the tainted ground upon which one stands to co-create meaning in a rhetorical discourse, prejudice as expressed in this dissertation is compatible with the postmodernist assumption that enthymematic understanding is a dialogic craft. Contrary to tyrannical determinations of what constitutes discourse, enthymematic understanding is about framing subjective universality as a dialogic standpoint, a standpoint shaped by “cooperative” meaning making (Bitzer, 1959, p. 407).

This dissertation calls for broadening the notion of the enthymeme to include prejudice as living a “sense of the appropriate with responsive interested others” (Farrell, 1999, p. 86). Like the understanding of rhetorical prejudice itself, the enthymeme needs to be broadened to include productive cooperative encounters for crafting ethical relationships. Such an understanding point to “how humans can most productively engage with others in meaningful dialogue—where dialogue goes beyond conversation, or even simple understanding” (Nakayama & Martin, 2014, p. 105). But a broadened understanding of the enthymeme requires recalling its intimate link with “dialogic ethical competence” (Arnett et al., 2009). Dialogic ethical competence becomes, among many other activities: listening, attentiveness, and the negotiation of differing senses of the good; self-reflexivity, a discernment process which Arnett et al. (2009) say is a “reflection upon one’s own” and “narrative commitments” (p. 95).

Taking the enthymeme into dialogic ethical competence requires discerning “the potential effects of our communication and how those effects themselves find meaning, judged by standpoint, situated in a narrative ground, informed by moments before us, and responsive to the Other’s position” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 94). The enthymeme gives currency to the ground we stand on or the ground our feet by responding to “moments of meeting” (Arnett & Arneson, 1999) with difference. The enthymeme is essentially “letting the other happen to me while

holding my own ground” (Stewart & Zediker, 2000, p. 232) as well as an “[an] interactive multivocality, in which multiple points of views retain their integrity as they play off each other” (Montgomery & Baxter, 1998, p. 160). This sense of the enthymeme is akin to Aristotle’s notion of *phronesis*.

Phronesis is practical wisdom; “it is a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for a [wo]man” (Aristotle, 1984, 1140b5-7; p. 1800). Implicit in this definition of *phronesis* is making prudent judgment calls about actions, whether productive or practical. In the words of French philosopher André Comte-Sponville, *phronesis* “could be called good sense, but in the service of goodwill. Or intelligence, but of the virtuous kind” (2001, p. 32). In this context, “the agent” who makes a prudent judgment calls “must have knowledge ... must choose the acts, and choose them for their own sakes, and ... must proceed from a firm and unchangeable character” (1105a30; p. 1746). From a postmodernist perspective, *phronesis* is an ethical competent action or activity which derives from the distinctive actions of a prudent person, *phronimos*.

Distinctive actions result from learnedness and experience. As Aristotle said, “Hence anyone who is to listen intelligently to lectures about what is noble and just and, generally, about the subject of political science must have been brought up in good habit” (1984, 1095b5; p. 1731). The *phronimos* is a “refined and well-bred [wo]man” (1128a33; p.1780) and a role model (see Carden, 2006, p. 22; Yu, 2007, p. 49). The *phronimos* is attentive to particularities. The attentiveness “requires perceptiveness” and the ability to bring the general and the particular “into illuminating connection with each other” (Dunne, 2005, p. 376). For Aristotle, moral excellence—a necessary character of the *phronimos*—plays a vital role in the acquisition of *phronesis*. Thus, Aristotle argues that “it is impossible to be practically wise [*phronesis*] without

being good [*phronimos*]" (1984, 1144b1; p. 1807). The *phronimos*, possessing *phronesis*, deliberates well, paying attention to the multiple goods. Though Aristotle did not use the term "multiple goods," the metaphor of multiple goods is used here in line with Aristotle's own assertion that *phronesis* is not only concerned with universals.

Phronesis, Aristotle says involves the ability to ability to deliberate and negotiate contending goods, listening attentively to particularities. "Nor is practical wisdom concerned with universals only—it must also recognize particulars; for it is practical, and practice is concerned with particulars ... practical wisdom is concerned with action; therefore, one should have both forms [the universal and the particular] of it" (1141b15-23; p. 1802). Joseph Dunne (1993) characterizes *phronesis* as "personal knowledge" because it expresses individuality (p. 244). For Thomas Farrell (1998), it is a "by product" of multivocality (p. 9). Eugene Garver (2004) contends it "emerges when we deliberate together, persuade each other, are persuaded by each other, and consider how we should persuade and be persuaded" (p. 1). The *phronimos* possesses *phronesis*; s/he's a person of experience, character or moral excellence, and engages the views of others in the *polis*. Such a view lends credence to a non-conventional view of *phronesis* as a dialogic ethical competent action propelled by "relevance, appropriateness, or sensitivity to context" (Dunne, 2005). Arnett in *Dialogic Confession* (2005) suggests such a view of *phronesis*.

Phronesis, practical wisdom responds to the historical situation ... and attentive to the particulars in a given situation (responsive to change) ... works within limits while creatively adding new ideas responsive to the historical moment ... recognizing that embedded agency makes a difference as we engage practical

wisdom that frames an appropriate ... response to a unique set of circumstances.

(pp. 47-48)

Phronesis is both attentive to and receptive of difference. A primary feature of *phronesis* is that it often mediates between the universal and the particular, between generalizations supported by biases and specific responses to the particularities of cultures, traditions, or narrative structures. My understanding of judgment in *technê* and *phronesis* is informed by Gadamer's thinking on the ancient problem of the many and the one as well as my placement of rhetorical prejudice within this problematic.

The intent of this chapter has been to set Aristotle's theory of rhetorical discourse within the context of subjective universality, an implicit reference to prejudice as dialogical opening for communication ethics. The enthymeme, *epistemic endoxa*, *technê*, and *phronesis* are specialized enterprises that foreground human judgment. *Epistemic endoxa* is treated as popular beliefs and expressions as well as a discursive substratum of judgment. The discourse of *epistemic endoxa* is enthymematic cognition. *Epistemic endoxa* is a non-scientific *endoxa* that privileges respect for culturally situated opinions or beliefs as well as the ability to acknowledge the truths or viewpoints of the other. Though non-scientific, *epistemic endoxa* has the potential for the construction of a more rigorous system of knowledge.

A *technê* grounds production within the framework of excellence, and is guided by virtues which are acquired through habits or instruction (MacIntyre, 1984). Rhetoric's aim as a *technê* is to cultivate and enact "practical reason" (Frentz, 1985, p. 1), which when applied to *phronesis* yields moral excellence (Warnick, 1989, p. 309). When applied to rhetorical discourse, *technê* guides the rhetor and audience to aim at persuasive reasoning otherwise than manipulative reason. The former is akin to individuality in the realm of subjective universality

while the latter is akin to individualism in the realm of the individualistic bad faith project of the enlightenment. Furthermore, as true art, *technê* guides discourse as rhetorical transaction in particular and human action in general as crafted communicative acts (see MacIntyre, 1984, p. 197). This dissertation locates such crafted communicative acts in petite subjectivities and dialogic deliberation. For Aristotle, crafted communicative acts propel enthymematic reasoning in ways that allow one to acknowledge subjective opinions of the generalized opinion without losing one's own ground.

The centrepiece of *technê* as crafted communicative acts is to create effective discourse in which individual biases are articulated to others (Enos & Lauer, 1992). For MacIntyre (1984), *technê*—as crafted communicative acts—is a rhetorical practice in “which goods internal to” a discourse “are realized in the course of” co-creating meanings “which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of” a discourse aimed at “excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended” (p. 175). In other words, *technê* is value-laden and is aimed at right actions as one approaches the *telos* of excellence. *Phronesis* is concerned with value and its starting points are biases produced by subjectivities directed toward the *telos* of excellence and happiness. Although rhetorical discourse is productive of *phronesis*, the action the discourse produces could be read and judged as grounded in bias. Bias is, therefore, a state of judgment according to Aristotle. The states of judgment that underlie the enthymeme, *epistemic endoxa*, *technê*, and *phronesis* are constitutive of the nature and relevancy of subjective universality in rhetorical discourse. Within the framework of the enthymeme and the various states of judgment, rhetorical prejudice flourishes as a communicative action that is welcoming of otherness.

Implications

Given postmodernity's emphasis on difference, a dialogic proposal seeking otherness must offer a full account of the local as it seeks subjective universalist terms of rhetorical prejudice. In a practical sense the local which Aristotle calls means of judgment describe an epistemic gap between "implicit and explicit goods underlying human communication" (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 113). Thus the question: How do we account for the epistemic gap between "cosmopolitanism and provinciality" (Roberts & Arnett, 2008) without sliding into "a bland relativistic toleration of multiple viewpoint" (Anderson & Cissna, 2008, p. 278)? Such is the reason that Martin Buber alerts us to the dialectal tension between subjective universality and universal generality. He writes:

It is only when reality is turned into logic and A and non-A dare no longer dwell together, that we get determinism and indeterminism, a doctrine of predestination and a doctrine of freedom, each excluding the other. According to the logical conception of truth only one of two contraries can be true, but in truth reality of life as one lives life they are inseparable. (Buber, 1997, p. 17)

An overemphasis on either subjective universality or universal generality can lead to perilous communicative corollaries, e.g., monological mutation of a narrative into a master narrative. Consistent with Buber's caution is the assumption that one can stand above history and cast judgment, an epistemological overreach that is dismissive of the narrative ground of the different Other (Arnett et al., 2007b). Buber's caution invites the suggestion of Clifford Geertz (2001):

What we need are ways of thinking that are responsive to particularities, to individualities, oddities, discontinuities, contrasts, and singularities, responsive to what Charles Taylor has called "deep diversity," a plurality of ways of belonging

and being, and that yet can draw from them—from it—a sense of connectedness that is neither comprehensive nor uniform, primal nor changeless, but nonetheless real. (p. 224)

Geertz's suggestion offers pragmatic insights to the communicative phenomenon of subjective universality and how its constitutive elements, namely, "particularities," "individualities," "oddities," "discontinuities," "contrasts," and "singularities" all point to the pragmatic and philosophical necessity of rhetorical prejudice. This necessity seeks and acknowledges otherness. Subjective universality is responsive to rhetorical prejudice.

Aristotle's notion of the enthymeme, the states of judgment, and the metaphor of this chapter, subjective universality underscore the necessity of prejudice in so far as it impacts dialogic judgment. Carlo Sigonio, a 15th century Italian humanist, connected judgment which he called the "power and habit to reason" to dialogue dependent upon a person's biased ground, that is, "what truth is within oneself" and the truth of the other. "The first consists of a certain silent activity of the mind, the second consists of an open questioning and answering with the person with whom we engage in a disputation" (in Spranzi, 2011, p. 138). Connecting judgment and dialogue directs attention to the situatedness of prejudice in every dialogic encounter. The situatedness of prejudice grounds dialogue in the ethical sensitivity and sensibility to the truth of the other. In this sense, Aristotle invites us to an ethical discernment process (phronesis) that opens individuals in a communicative relationship to be attentive and responsive to narratives that both shape and ground dialogic conversation.

This chapter's focus on subjective universality is a contribution to the ongoing conversation that there are multiple ethics to dialogic communication (Arnett et al., 2009). With its theorization in attentive listening and learning from difference, subjective universality

engages prejudice to connect sensitivity to the self and other. In this sense, subjective universality fosters “enlarged thought” (Arendt, 1978; Benhabib, 1988, 1992), cultivates “fusion of horizons” (Gadamer, 1975/1989), provide opportunities for “a special convergence—born of openness to possibility and happenstance—of dialogic imagination, dialogic courage, and narrative conscience” (Poulos, 2008, p. 117), and helps to balance the “metaphors of discourse” with the “metaphors of action” (Schrag, 1986 in Arnett, 1992, pp. 17-18). James Marsh (2014), working in the tradition of Bernard Lonergan elaborated on this process:

The desire to know, our questioning orientation to being, expresses itself in ever increasing identification with otherness as it is in the otherness. Being as other to me and as including me is the object of the pure desire to know. To experience, understand, judge, choose, in line with the transcendental precepts, is progressively to say “yes” to the other, to be converted to the other. We have here a deepening receptivity to the other. “Receptivity” and “otherness” are correlatives. (p. 47)

When tied to “receptivity” and “otherness,” rhetorical prejudice provides a ground for conceiving the dialogic form of the enthymeme, the various states of the judgment various means of judgment—*episteme endoxai*, *techne* and *phronesis*—which I call subjective universality. In recognizing the relevance of subjective universality in dialogue, this chapter conceptualizes prejudice as rhetorical openness to difference.

The next chapter takes us into conversation about locative truths, introducing the basic terms of the conversation from a non-conventional understanding of the Pauline concept of universalism. The chapter places locative truths against monolithic discourses and practices that

are tyrannical to difference. Locative truths, the chapter will argue, demystifies the dialogic nature of rhetorical prejudice.

CHAPTER THREE—Universal Singularity: Dialogue and Particularities

This chapter advances the assumption that subjective universality (as discussed in the previous chapter) is constitutive of dialogic engagement according to tacitly understood practices of enthymematic understanding. This understanding presumes attentiveness to *episteme endoxai* which favor a dialogue as dialectical (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996), agonistic, (Smith, 2008) “tensional ethical practice” (Stewart & Zediker, 2000). These conceptions of dialogue are central to Saint Paul’s notion of universalism, which I argue, is founded on the notion of “universal singularity.” The metaphor “universal singularity”—borrowed from Alain Badiou (2003)—is a “dialogic ethical competent” (Arnett et al., 2009) act that offers both theoretical and practical framework for questioning the prevailing abstractions of totality. As Levinas contends, “singularity cannot find a place in a totality” (quoted in Eskin, 2000, p. 19). Universal singularity engages “the necessity of the urban and the different” (Roberts & Arnett, 2008, p. 2), calling forth an attentiveness to locality, locative truths, or particularities.

In this chapter, following Badiou, I argue that universal singularity, a non-conventional derivative of Saint Paul’s notion of universalism constitutes locality, locative truths, or particularities—biases—that link up the “paradoxical connection between a subject without identity and a law without support” (Badiou, 2003, p. 5). Such an understanding provides ground for conceiving prejudice as the biased narrative ground upon which one stands in every dialogic encounter. Universal singularity, as discussed in this chapter, should be thought of as a necessary communicative gesture that welcomes rhetorical prejudice as the engagement of provinciality to express meaning in the face of difference. Meaning, here, “pertains to the individuated components of stories—whether they represent accurate assertions about social reality and thereby constitute good reasons for belief or action” (Fisher, 1987, p. 105). This work

understands prejudice through the lens of concatenated understandings of the Christ event as local representations of truth. Thus, the Christ event is at odds with the western epistemological coordinates of truth as pragmatic, coherent, and consistent narrative. From this perspective, truth is a locative phenomenological response to context-driven stories. Context(uality) is about difference, and difference is about context(uality). Thus, the Christ event is meaningless to any culture, tradition, or narrative structure unless it is context-driven.

I wish to advance a conception of Pauline rhetoric of universal singularity that considers context-driven narratives that frame communication within an ethics of attentive responsiveness. My conception of the Pauline rhetoric of universal singularity is derived from Badiou's reading of Paul. Badiou's Pauline rhetoric questions unreflective loyalty to commonality and a given "hypergood" tied to what Saint Augustine of Hippo described in the *City of God* as "lusts to dominate the world" and the "passion for dominion" (Saint Augustine, 1958). A prosaic understanding of Pauline universalism as an opportunistic lust for monological control undermines narrative bias by dictating "the practices that shape a given narrative structure" (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 118). This work links Badiou's notion of Pauline universalism and "grounded conviction" within the framework of dialogue and particularities. Such as proposal calls for understanding universal singularity as situated *subtractive provinciality*.

Universal singularity addresses Paul's notion of universalism as fundamental prejudice which bears witness to the Christ event as situated subtractive provinciality otherwise than a provincial commitment to absolute difference. The former is interactive, quite like Benhabib's (1992, 2002) interactive universalism. The latter has roots in Hegelian dialectics, a monologic perception of truth, and is incongruous with the former, the postmodern assumption that difference is an originary first principle of human communication and relationship.

This chapter first addresses the concept of subtractive universalism, a heuristic metaphor I coined to situate Badiou's treatment of Pauline universalism within a postmodern communicative context. Second, the chapter takes on the "provincial" nature of universal singularity in the Pauline context of universalism. Third, the chapter suggests the facticity of universal singularity as dialogic affirmation of difference. Fourth, the chapter concludes with a consideration of "dialogic ethical competence" which attends to particularities as universal singularity.

Subtractive Universalism

Saint Paul's universalism, an implicit reference to prejudice as the ground on which we stand is evident in Badiou's conception of what constitutes provincality and locative truths. Badiou (2003) corroborates this assertion, arguing that Paul does not allow any ethnic group to possess the truth to the exclusion of others: "Paul's unprecedented gestures consist in subtracting truth from the communitarian grasp, be it that of a people, a city, an empire, a territory, or a social class" (p. 5). Through the prism of postmodern rhetoric and dialogic communication, it could be argued that much of Paul's notion of universalism *a la* Badiou is about narrative conviction if one understands by the term, universal singularity, the provincality of locative truths. His writing also provides insights into the attempt to synthesize the nature of prejudice rhetorically construed in the body of the diverse Pauline communities whose experience of the Christ event defines provincality as a public admission of situated bias that privileges listening to a narrative of a locality otherwise than dictating the universal common sense of a totality.

In engaging with Badiou's Paul, this chapter underscores the possibilities of shifting the terrains of monologic dogmatism as particular narrative structures interrogate hegemonic

epistemic impositions. This interrogation constitutes the notion of subtractive universalism as a turn away from *provincial reclusivism* or a provincial detachment from an imposed leviathan narrative or absolute difference. The emphasis here is a rhetorical conviction that seeks “narrative agreement” as an enthymematic response to a narrative event. John Caputo (1993) describes an event as a “happening” which possesses with “intensity” an intensity that leads to the interpretative otherwise, and a “singularity” that is grounded in contextual truth, (p. 94), a truth subtracted or distanced from a metaphysical grand narrative, an evental truth grounded in fundamental prejudice. In fact, Caputo’s definition of event has kinship with Arnett’s oft-used extended metaphor, “dialogic response to the demands of the historical moment” (see, for example, Arnett, 2005, p. 5) as well as my own metaphor of enthymematic responsiveness. The two metaphors—Arnett’s and mine—make the notion of event, as explained by Caputo, dialogic moments, opening interactions between the particular and the universal, the non-sense narrative and the common-sense narrative. Event particularizes a given narrative. This is only possible when subjectivity is distanced from the subsumptions of universal-ontological assurances.

Hegel and the was a philosophical force behind universal ontological assurances. His “synthesis-driven dialectic” (Trott, 2015, p. 63) attracted criticism from several continental philosophers like Schelling, Feuerbach, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Popper, Adorno, Levinas, and Derrida, to mention a few. For these philosophers, Hegel’s dialectics offered an ontological “totality of absolute knowledge” that promises completeness and an overview of what there is, and of what can thought, thereby ... imposing closure and homogeneity” (Hodge, 2010, p. 52). Badiou, in a similar philosophical tradition, questioned the tyranny of the Hegelian dialectics and its obsession with totality. For Badiou, truth is not totality. Thus, totality is a phenomenological myth and an ethical impossibility.

Despite questioning the Hegelian dialectics and its emphasis on totality, Badiou, engages Hegel's dialectics within the interplay of universal singularity and the universal generality, suggesting a phenomenology of totality that universality, in fact, affirms subjectivity. Badiou writes,

Of course, we share with Hegel a conviction about the identity of being and thought. But for us this identity is a local occurrence and not a totalized result. We also share with the Hegel the conviction regarding the universality of the True. But for us this universality is guaranteed by the singularity of truth-events, and not by the view that the Whole is the history of its immanent reflection. (LW 141-3). (Bosteels, 2014, p. 142)

This is the source of Badiou's famous philosophical maxim: "subject-truths" (p. 60; see footnote 1), and the beginning of his concept of subtraction, a notion that would be alluded to in several parts of this chapter. The subject-truth, is a rejection of the Hegelian dialectic, which is rooted in ontological truth, i.e., truth as infinite. The Hegelian dialectic engages a violent differentiation of difference, and by so doing, colonizing difference into an ontological whole, and offering generality as the truth of being, a new truth which he (Hegel) alluded to in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as new spirit-propelled awakening (Hegel, 1977, p. 6), a new awakening to "Absolute Truth ... achieved within a dialectical process in which mind or spirit, through the process of alienation and negation, arrives at an ever-higher unity ..." (Phillips, 2009, p. 76). (see p. 61, footnote 9). The Hegelian dialectic, properly called Hegelian negation, resonates with the colonial strategy of divide and conquer. In other words, differentiation becomes an opportunistic avenue for colonizing difference, individuality, or singularity into a truth system of an infinite whole, Absolute Truth.

Badiou would argue that the notion of colonization is tantamount to the usurpation of a subject space. Such colonization is based on what he described as the excesses of “an expansive typology ... the effectuation of a global interiorization” (Badiou, 2009c, p. 119). Badiou critiques Hegel’s dialectics, a speculative idealism based on the “interiorization of Totality” (Bosteels, 2014, p. 142) that was receptive purely to the “objective plinth of ‘social formations’ or even ... the great ideological, religious or mythical discourses” (Badiou, 1999, p. 33). Such Hegelian proselytism constitutes a Deleuzian univocity, which is at odds with plurality (see Badiou, 2005, p. 23; De Beistegui, 2005, p. 53) or *plural-entities*. Badiou understood *plural-entities* not as a derivative of an ontological addition (amalgamation), but a phenomenological subtraction (separation). As it was for Nietzsche, ethics is a disclosure of a facticity that had otherwise been absorbed into a *Great Value* system aimed at fossilizing metanarratives.

For Badiou, ethics holds together unity “without totalizing” difference or singularity. Subtraction reveals the prevarication of a *Great Value* system, disrupting the “bad faith” (Sartre, 1953) assumption that system driven narratives are the sites of truth. Subtraction separates from system driven narratives, pointing to petite narratives, instead, as the originary sites of a truth procedure. The roots of difference are found in subtractive universalism, which is included in a truth procedure. Subtractive universalism works within Arendt’s enlarged mentality (1982) and plurality of publics (1998)—broadening the conversational horizon to include other views—on the one hand, and Morocco’s “phenomenological distance” (2005)—“permitting appropriate space to texture relational development” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 124), on the other hand, to develop an enthymematic conception of relationality that is not aloof, but aware of a different narrative ground. Subtractive universalism engages a narrative ground as a particularity narrative.

Gadamer (1975/1989) reminds us of the communicative relevancy of particularity from the perspectives of the fusion of horizons as otherwise than standardizing narratives (p. 305). Gadamer calls for overcoming absolutist particularism, a form of despotic subtraction that is “based on subjection and abdication of reason” (p. 281). Particularity, on the other hand belongs to a theory of prejudices free from the extremism of the Enlightenment” (p. 281). Like Gadamer, Arendt (1951) rejected absolutist particularism, calling for—in the spirit of enlarged mentality—“broadening one’s perspective with other perspectives such that one reaches a genuinely pluralist and, therefore, more” dialogical and less monological (Vasterling, 2011).

Furthermore, subtractive universalism provides a way of thinking about grounded conviction, a localized truth phenomenologically, existentially, and philosophically. From a phenomenological perspective, grounded conviction is a “subjective fidelity” to the Christ event. For Badiou, the Christ event is a provincial truth: “it is the truth of a specific situation that, once declared and maintained by a subjective fidelity, has universal scope” (Riera, 2005, p. 11). Badiou’s universal is not monologic; rather, it is dialogic because it is attentive to particularities. These particularities are *non-sense* narrative sites of the evental truth, not *common-sense* narrative structures for the evental truth. The defining feature of *non-sense* narrative sites is prejudice. Thus, it is by focusing attention on prejudice that the Christ event becomes a pragmatic communicative event or reality which is otherwise than a conventional discourse whose narrative structure is grounded in an absolutist Newtonian language aimed at totality and control (See Christians, 1995, p. 59; Riera, 2005, p. 11).

Existentially, subtractive universalism could be considered an enthymematic response “tempered by a listening to and learning” from a provincial narrative (Arnett, 2005, p. 15). The provincial narrative becomes the sense-making site for the Christ event. Badiou stresses the

importance of the Christ event as an existential turn away from totalitarian representations. Subtractive universalism could stand in for Karl Jaspers' understanding of the event as *existenz* (Reynolds, 2014, p. 166). For Jaspers, *existenz*, like an event, transcends hegemonic epistemic evaluation and translation. Thus, *existenz* defies clarity. The Christ event is a subjective communicative encounter with the unknown as well as the willingness to responsively engage—*whether Buberian or Levinasian*—the paradox of contradictions that characterize the postmodern era of narrative contention (see Jaspers, 1955, p. 27).

From a philosophical point of view, Subtractive universalism addresses the multiple philosophical issues that “background” and “foreground” the Pauline concept of universalism. Paul lived and worked in an era of multiple philosophies. To bring the gospels from within a purely “conservative vision of Jewish law” (Badiou, 2003, p. 14) to a Greek world rooted in the language of *philosophia*, calls for engaging the “tainted ground” (Arnett, 2008b) of each culture—Jewish and Greek. For Badiou's Paul, a formulaic response to the Christ event is problematic because truth “is neither, structural, nor axiomatic, nor legal” (Badiou, 2003, p. 14). A structural, axiomatic, or legal truth procedure would lead to an identitarian theory of discourse. Such a discourse, in Bonhoeffer's rhetoric of responsibility would lead to “perplexity,” and eventually “to insensitivity” (see Arnett, 2005, p. 200), an apathetic dismissive stance.

In weaving the phenomenological, existential, and philosophical components of subtractive universalism together, this work teases out of Badiou's Pauline notion of universalism, an ethics between universal singularity and universal generality. It is, therefore, no accident that Paul mobilizes an entirely different discourse structure, a universal singularity, which Badiou (2003) claims “is offered to all, or addressed to everyone, without a condition of belonging being able to limit this offer, or this address” (p. 14). The discourse of universal

singularity is rooted in a philosophical ethics of non-conditionality; it embraces singularities as a rhetorical and hermeneutical entrance into the Christ event. For Badiou, conditionality breeds a “militant process of truth” (see Barker, 2002, p. 101). The metaphor of non-conditionality, which is the basis of the discourse of universal singularity, on the other hand, works for the concept of subtractive universalism. This subtractive universalism is the subject of the Pauline notion of universalism.

Subtractive universalism is about newness, i.e., a renewed experience of the Christ event. In the experience of the event, a singular truth is subtracted from the general truth. In other words, the Christ event comes as renewed affirmation of truth, a novel truth devoid of any statist dictate or interest. Like the Badiou notion of subtraction, subtractive is not a Hegelian dialectical negation, but a phenomenological-existential affirmation, a becoming—resurrection (Badiou, 2003, p. 66). It is a resurrection that gives birth to subjectivity (p. 68). Subtractive universalism becomes the condition for grounded conviction. Badiou called grounded conviction, a “declared conviction” (p. 87). The Pauline notion of universalism calls for subtracting a provincial affirmation from the Christ event. As Badiou (2009b) puts it, “the event is ‘grace’ ... and is presented as pure donation. Our subjective constitution depends on this event: ‘You are not under law but under grace’ (Rom 6:14)” (p. 33). The event allows the subjective individual to experience, relive, and reaffirm its subjectivity by subtracting itself from totalitarian abstractions.

From a communicative standpoint, Badiou’s Paul frames a subtractive universalism like Benhabib’s notion of “interactive universalism.” Benhabib sees difference as the genesis of every human communicative encounter. Context is important for Benhabib. Truth for her, is meaningless without context. Thus, attempts to decontextualize truth only reifies “uniform rational moral autonomy” (Johnson, 2002, p. 25), and undermines the ground of others. Uniform

rational moral autonomy is determinate, and levels the narrative ground and the singularity of the different other. Interactive universalism, on the other hand, privileges learning to the different other. According to Benhabib (2002), we “can learn the *wholeness* of the other(s) only through their” biased narrative grounds (p. 14).

Interactive universalism is bias-sensitive, and implies that the Christ event is grounded conviction, an acknowledgment of the narrative bias. Benhabib, by way of her interactive universalism, would situate dialogue within the context of a Christ event, the narrative bias of other people, culture or tradition. With Benhabib and Badiou, this work calls for acknowledging the inevitability of fundamental prejudice or grounded conviction. Fundamental prejudice, like the Christ event, constitutes the procedural truth upon which universal singularity thrives. Through the notion of subtractive universalism, we engage difference through the interpretive lens of pragmatic humility—we cannot stand above history to interpret the world, but be part of history to inculturate the event as a local resurrection experience.

Aristotle warned Athenians of the dangers of excessiveness. Grounded conviction when pushed to the extreme, Sissela Bok (2002) warned, might lead to a Cartesian fascination and obsession with absolute certainty. For Badiou, it is this obsession with absolute certainty that gave birth to “militant universalism” and totalitarianism, which is a form abstract homogenization, ever detrimental to difference, the provincial home of universal singularity. The next section recasts the relationship between provincality and universal singularity as a post-dialectic engagement of difference.

Provinciality and Universal Singularity

Badiou's reading of Paul turns on four interrelated concepts: truth, event, subject and fidelity. What is most important to see in Badiou's reading of Paul is the provincial nature of universal singularity evident in Paul's proclamation that "Jesus is resurrected" (Romans 1:4, 1 Corinthians 15:1–4). Badiou (2003) sees Paul's proclamation as a "Christ event," an invocation of a singular truth procedure that is otherwise than "identitarian singularity." Badiou writes, "Truth is diagonal relative to every communitarian subset; it neither claims authority from, nor ... constitutes any identity. It is offered to all, or addressed to everyone, without a condition of belonging being able to limit this offer, or this address" (p. 14). The communicative terminus of this truth procedure is provinciality, "a new kind of universal subjective figure" (Dunning, 2014, p. 40) that interrogates normative customs and epistemic structures that protect tyrannical hegemonic spaces as sites for engaging difference.

Badiou's Paul privileges provinciality over cosmopolitanism. Provinciality rallies universal singularity against "prevailing abstractions" of homogeneity (p. 14). That is, locality cannot be co-opted into a global ethic. Locality is both embodied subjectivity and situated singularity that co-exists with agreed upon understanding of content. Thus, "Badiou believes that there is no truth in general; there are only particular truths in particular situations" (Hallward, 2003, p. 154). Truth is also heterogeneous (Badiou, 2001). For Badiou, truth—to use an expression of Arnett, Fritz and Holba (2007b)—is a "touchstone" which "provides a temporal marker of location, a general indicator of direction without the definitiveness of an absolute" (2007b, p. 130). Truth, as Badiou understands it through the prisms of Pauline universalism, privileges provincial articulations of biases or subtraction of diverse subjectivities in discursive spheres that have otherwise been co-opted, silenced or erased.

Badiou is attracted to Paul's fearless articulation of the biased ground in the face of universal generality:

For me, Paul is a poet-thinker of the event, as well as one who practices and states the invariant traits of what can be called the militant figure. He brings for the entirely human connection, whose destiny fascinates me, between the general idea of a rupture, an overturning, and that of a thought-practice that is this rupture's subjective materiality. (Badiou, 2003)

Badiou is especially attracted to the "thought-practice" that Paul brings to the Christ event, the resurrection. The event is a radical novelty, an irruption unparalleled in history. As Badiou puts it, "pure event, the opening of an epoch, the transformation of the relation between the possible and the impossible" (p. 45). In this sense, the resurrection for Badiou is a truth event or procedure that is akin to a "rhetorical interruption" that disrupts "normative patterns" (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 163). The event instantiates truth as a particularity otherwise than convention. It is this otherwise than convention that Badiou calls truth procedure, a process, in which truth becomes subjective singularity through fidelity to the event.

Because the event is otherwise than convention, "it relates the particularity of a situation from the bias of its void" (Badiou, 2001, p. 73). What Badiou means by this is that the event trumps generality. Badiou (2005) talks about the event as otherwise than convention in the tradition of Blaise Pascal as going "*against the flow*" of "the world"... in order to invent ... forms of ... conviction ... " (p. 222) that embraces the deconstruction of any narrative structure that endorses conventional discourses. For Badiou Badiou (2003), conventional discourses are inimical to universal singularity because they—conventional discourses—oscillate "between the abstract universal of capital and localized persecutions" (p. 12). For Badiou, truth is not some

form of “identitarian occlusion” or a patented property of identitarian particularism neither is it an unfettered confidence in the homogenization forces of universalism that annex local values and economies. The demands of a truth interrupt the colonizing tendencies of master contingencies.

The Pauline project, according to Badiou is about control and transformation. The former is a “hostility” that betrays itself through nominal occlusions” and “identifies truth procedures typologically (p. 12). The latter is dragging “the Good New (the Gospels) out of the rigid enclosure” and confinement of “generalities,” and “mobilizing a universal singularity both against the prevailing abstractions ... and against communitarian or particularist protest” (pp. 13-14). This is evident in contemporary discourses that pretend to be tolerant of plurality, especially the space or locality of the other, but in reality are involved in what I call *phenomenological co-optation*—the global threatens and annexes the local through monologic impositions that are dismissive of difference. Phenomenological co-optation “imposes the rule of abstract homogenization” (pp. 9-10). Contemporary examples of abstract homogenization include neoliberalism, cultural imperialism, identitarian fanaticism, nominal occlusions, minoritarian pronouncements, to mention a few. These, Badiou, says, are derivatives of an ethical ideology steeped in universal generality. The communicative problem of this ethical ideology is control and domination of a culture, tradition, or narrative based upon the metaphor “homogeneous expansion” (Badiou, 2003, p. 11).

This grounding in the habitus of abstract homogenization “plays a contraining role relative to every truth procedure. It is organically *without truth*” (p. 11). On the other hand, universal singularity, by interrupting abstract homogenization, elicits a response that transcends and traverses received opinions and customs without having to silence multiplicity of voices.

Could this be the reason behind Paul's refusal to take a side on the issue of circumcision during his stay in Antioch? Badiou seems to think so. Badiou's Paul, in all faithfulness to the Christ event, acknowledges the locative truths of each group, "the doctrinal sympathizers and the 'true' converts, initiated and circumcised." According to Badiou, truth defies gradation, and when it comes to the truth, there is no sitting on the fence. "Either one participates in it ... or remain foreign to it" (p. 21). After all, a truth event is a subjective recognition of singularity (p. 22). "This is the reason why Paul not only refuses to stigmatize difference and customs, but also undertake to accommodate them" (p. 99). Disconnecting the universal singularity from difference is tantamount to "monopolizing and sterilizing" (p. 99) the Christ event. As such, universal singularity is the provincial home of truth; provinciality underlies and shapes a truth procedure by acknowledging difference as locative truth.

Dialogic Universal Singularity

A dialogic understanding of universal singularity is an originaive form of awakening, that of engaging multiplicity in the tradition of postmodern communication ethics. For Badiou such an originaive form of awakening constitutes a truth procedure that questions brazen homogeneity. Calling this truth procedure "an immediate subjective recognition" of universal singularity (Badiou, 2003, p. 22). The truth procedure interrupts the rules of a homogeneous universal by welcoming universal singularity as a multiplicity of truths. For Badiou, it is important that universal generality is not masqueraded as a singularity to tactically enforce the rules of contemporary neoliberalism, which he (Badiou) describes caricatures forms as the "globalized logic of capital," "identitarian fanaticism," "communitarization of the public sphere," and "automatisms of capital" (p. 9). Thus, for Badiou (2009b), universal singularity "is

at variance the figure of the same,” and interrupts “the superpositions of the registers of homogeny” (pp. 27-28). Universal singularity is in principle universal in scope, but committed to “universal multiplicity” (Badiou, 2003, p. 45). Universal singularity, thus, entails a responsibility to multivocality, and requires a disinterestedness that points to difference as a communicative necessity. In this sense, universal singularity is, following Benhabib, dialogical universalism (see Hutchings, 2013, p. 88). I call it dialogic universal singularity.

It is no accident that Badiou saw in Paul a universalism that interrupts the authoritarian management of discourse. Control and domination was at the heart of both the Jewish and Greek discourse. And so Paul offers a new perspective, a Christian discourse that embraces differing viewpoints and the necessity of prejudice, bidding farewell to “figure of the master”—totalitarianism of the Greek discourse and the exceptionalism of the Jewish discourse (Badiou, 2009b, p. 30). Johann Baptist Metz (1969), a Catholic theologian called for replacing “system concepts” with “subject concepts.” The new emphasis—subject concepts—point to an understanding of “historical consciousness” as primordially *embodied* in an ethical response to systemic erasures of difference (Baird, 1999). Like Metz, Badiou calls for abandoning any truth system that assumes communication begins in uniformity, not in diversity. Tied to the notion of universal singularity, Badiou situates communication in the acknowledgement of universal multiplicity.

The ethic of universal singularity emanates from a provincial sensitivity to truths which takes us into the home of *Existenz*, an expansion of consciousness that is attentive to togetherness not as homogeneity but as heterogeneity. Karl Jaspers’ (1957) communication of *Existenz* presumes “a limitless mobility of standpoints” (p. 70). The notion of standpoints connects to W. Barnett Pearce’s (1998) call to be open “to the possibility of transformations of our

consciousness in ways that expand our horizons so that what we had thought of as ‘wholes’ in themselves are seen as parts of larger ‘wholes.’ This not only expands our view of the world, it expands that with which we view the world” (Pearce, 1998, pp. 229-230; quoted in Gordon, 2000, p. 109). Standpoints interrupt abstract homogenization, but promote provincial truths or local narratives. Dogmatic truth is an existential obliteration of singularities, truths of others. “For the most devastating threat to truth in the world is the overwhelming claim to the absolutely true” (Jaspers, 1973, p. 99). For Jaspers there are multiple truths. It is within a given standpoint that the event makes sense. Badiou presents an ethic of universal singularity as a standpoint within of the Christ event.

For Jaspers, genuine human communication “respects, emphasizes, and intensifies the differences between one’s existence and the other, instead of dwarfing, slurring, and hiding them” (Kaufmann, 1957, pp. 212-213). Like Jaspers, Badiou’s Paul offers a non-conventional understanding of universalism that welcomes existence as a locative understanding of otherness. The existenz of the different other is a recognition of the Christ event, and the Christ event is itself an experience of the existenz. It is within the existenz that the Christ event is revealed as a locative truth, giving birth to the ongoing issue of multiple ethics. The relationship among Badiou’s Christ event, Jaspers’ existenz, and an ethics grounded in narrative bias stresses the importance of communication praxis. By communication praxis is meant an enthymematic interruption that invokes fidelity to event, offering confidence in the local; it is a confidence that frames the Christ event as a conversational home for difference, multiple ethics.

For Badiou, the Christ event is a discourse of and about the resurrection as the rebirth of universal singularity, an originary difference. His understanding of difference is beyond provincial attachments to small town normative ethics. Badiou would argue that one should be

mindful of the potential dangers imminent in unbridled confidence in normative ethics. Thus, his argument that “there is no ethics in general. There are only—eventually—ethics of processes by which we treat the possibilities of a situation” (Badiou, 2001, p. 16). The inevitable signs of the time invite attentiveness to singularity of the Christ event. Signs are evental; they are irruptive, and question generalities and status quos.

Such a questioning, Badiou would argue, consists in the declaration of new truth, universal singularity, unlike the so called universal generality Hegel proposed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel translated truth within a structural, axiomatic, and legal framework, rendering truth a static reality of perception. Such a view of truth guarantees an absolute ethical life, breeding the illusion that “objective freedom satisfies the requirements of the subjective will through supplying rational determinations” (Rose, 2008, p. 66; see footnote 28), which in itself, is a form of totalitarianism. For Badiou (2009a), truth is a becoming. It is “a radical event” (p. 41), “which activates” singularity “in another logic of its appearing ... resurrection” (p. 65). “Another logic,” for Badiou, is a truth procedure, which like “grace ... occurs without being couched in any predicate” (Badiou, 2009b, p. 76). Grace permits a truth procedure to function without what Judith Butler (1993) calls “ideological formulations,” and the “desymbolization” (p. 147) of difference. Grace finds answers outside of theories that valorize a “law” (p. 147), subtracting singularity from ideological formulations that what I call *habits of the Sittlichkeit*.

Badiou situates his ethics within an ethics of particularity which works in tandem with narrative standpoints. Narrative standpoints provide a way for engaging universal singularity as an ethical response to the signs of the time. As an ethical necessity, universal singularity possesses a communicative challenge in the form of sublime dialogic questioning. In facing this

questioning, difference, as contextualized truth event interrupts the status quo. Thus, the universalism that Badiou reads out of Paul proposes a universal singularity based on an ethic useful in engaging competing narratives and points to dialogic fluidity. Universal singularity is dialogic rather than monologic, heterogeneous rather than homogeneous, fluid rather than fixed, provincial rather than cosmopolitan, and listening rather than telling. Universal singularity is about multiplicity of ethics, which constitutes genuine dialogue. “The only genuine ethics is of *truths* in the plural—or more precisely, the only ethics is of processes of truth, of the labor that brings *some* truths into the world” (Badiou, 2001, p. 28). Universal singularity creates spaces within which locative truths (of the event) emerge.

At the crust of universal singularity is an ethical principle that both interrupts and listens: “interrupts” attempts to totalize a truth and listens to locative truths that would otherwise be erased under an absolutist framework; “listens” privileges an attentiveness “that suspends the willfulness of self and fore-knowledge in order to receive the singularities of the alterity of the other” (Lipari, 2009b, p. 44). Furthermore, universal singularity transforms the concrete reality of everyday lives, whose living memories are sharpened by rhetorical prejudice, and whose neglecting results in communicative displacement. What is presented in this annexation is a normative concoction brewed in universal confidence and offered as a curative for all *other subjectivities*. Finally, universal singularity projects a quest for rhetorical prejudice and presents itself as a dialogic standpoint to yield a pluralistic vision. Thus, as a dialogic communicative phenomenon, universal singularity presupposes a philosophy of communication that inevitably results in a communicative grasp which acknowledges difference and heterogeneity.

We can see from the above discussion that Badiou’s understanding of a Pauline universal singularity is a form of non-conventional universalism, and is unlike traditional universalism.

What makes universal singularity different is its dialogic nature; it is founded on difference grounded in bias. Thus, when Badiou (2009b) posed the question, “What are the conditions for a *universal singularity*? (p. 13), he was teasing out of the Pauline notion of universalism, a dialectic which offers an account of the truth procedure as “interpreting otherwise”—to use a Levinasian term—than an ontological allegiance to status quo generalities, whether “statist or ideological” (p. 13). The interpreting otherwise, I would argue, points to the truth procedure as a sign of the time. We live in a moment of dialectical tension—tension between universal singularity and universal generality—suggesting the need for a dialogic ethical competent response (see Arnett et al., 2009) to a truth procedure therein a narrative structure. The picture of the dialogic ethical competent response associated with a true procedure is the “context within which dialogue occurs” (Cissna & Anderson, 1994, p. 15). Badiou contextualizes truth as an ethical competent response to a dialogic necessity, universal singularity.

Universal singularity, a Derivative Ethical Competence

Often, Badiou frames ethical competence as the relationship between grace and resurrection with an enthymematic impulse. For example, Badiou argues,

The Resurrection ... in Paul’s own eyes ... is pure event, opening of an event, transformation of the relations between the possible and the impossible ... Its genuine meaning is that it testifies to the possible victory over death, a death that Paul envisages ... in terms of subjective disposition. Whence the necessity of constantly linking resurrection to our resurrection, of proceeding from singularity to universality and the vice versa ... It is in this sense that it is grace, and not history. (Badiou, 2003, p. 45)

Badiou's choice of the metaphors, "relations between the possible and the impossible," "linking resurrection to our resurrection," and "proceeding from singularity to universality and the vice versa," equates dialogic ethical competence with the enthymematic impulse to co-create meaning without sterilizing fundamental prejudice.

The notion of universal singularity points to the importance of narrative bias or fundamental prejudice as an ethical competent context for engaging difference or negotiating contending virtues. Universal singularity, predicated on a grounded sense of narrative bias or fundamental prejudice, is core to human communication. Badiou points to this necessity, providing us with the example of Paul's "grounded sense of conviction" (Arnett, 2005), "becoming subject" to truth (see Critchley, 2005). The truth event interrupts a routine. For Paul, routine constitutes the perpetrates totalitarian abstractions. Contrary to the universal generality, universal singularity is an ethics of subjectivity that promotes an understanding of a provincial conviction of a truth. This understanding echoes Arnett's (1997) reminder of the necessity of multiple ethics in an age of increasing diversity. Universal singularity as an ethics of subjectivity embraces attentive listening to a multiplicity of narrative and virtue structures propelled by what Arnett, Fritz, and Bell (2009) call "dialogic ethics competence."

Universal singularity suggests an alternative between the abstractions of totality and localized tyranny through listening and learning from the contradiction that are within opposing narratives. For example, when confronted with the problematics of the Antiochian controversy, Badiou (2003) says, Paul would not "consent to the distinction between the two circles ... the doctrinal sympathizers and the 'true' converts, initiated and circumcised" because "for him, a truth procedure does not comprise degrees. Either one participates in it, declaring the founding the event and drawing its consequences, or one remains foreign to it" (p. 21). Badiou's Paul, in

this case, seems to be attentive the dialectic tensions in the truth events of both groups, acknowledging their grounded convictions of the Christ event, and inviting each group to confront its particularities in the face of the Christ event which interrupts attempts to sterilize difference. Thus Badiou says “there are differences” (p. 98), insisting that “there is nothing else” (p. 99). Universal singularity interrupts hegemonic telling and promotes dialogic listening to varying viewpoints. The dialogic demands of universal singularity is attentiveness to diversity in other for its principle of shaping understanding truth, not as a centralized communicative event but, as a decentralized communicative phenomenon. Thus, universal singularity, exemplifies the necessity of a listening act that acknowledges the irreducibility of truth in absolutist terms.

What constitutes dialogic competence in universal singularity? If we follow Badiou’s suggestions, it involves an ethical response to both the known and the unknown, the accepted and the unaccepted, the familiar and the unfamiliar, including responsibility for the responsibility of otherness, i.e., a sense of the biased ground in the face of events that defy commonality. This ethical response is sustained in and around rhetorical prejudice as the ground on which one stands, between and among universal singularities situated historically. Badiou’s Pauline universal singularity in the sense advanced here provides insights into the radical sense of the truth event with the emergence of difference.

The relationship between truth procedure and difference is in the form of an ethical dialogic competent act of listening to singularity as ethics of truths which replaces the bad faith presumptions of “nominal occlusions”—“which identifies truth procedures typologically” (Badiou, 2003, p. 12)—with Richard Bernstein’s “‘engaged fallibilistic pluralism’ that seeks to meet our fragmented moments with respect and full knowledge of the fragility of the learners and the world before us” (Arnett et al., 2009, p. 222) and Bakhtin’s dialogic imagination where

“we find an opening for learning, for growing, for changing, and for constitutive transformation in encounter” (Poulos, 2008, p. 122). In essence, universal singularity prompts a meeting of locative truths—a meeting of peoples, cultures, traditions, or narrative structures within the framework of enthymematic impulse.

I ground the notion of universal singularity in the following enthymematic implicatures, a la Cissna and Anderson’s (1994) ingredients of dialogue: “immediacy of presence,” “emergent unanticipated consequences,” “recognition of strange otherness,” “collaborative orientation,” “vulnerability, mutual implication,” “temporal flow,” “genuineness,” and “authenticity” (pp. 13-15). These features of dialogue invite the co-creation of meaning, an encounter of truth procedures without trumping universal singularity. Universal singularity is not about defending one’s truth and standing one’s ground while tyrannically managing the truth of the other. Instead, Universal singularity summons a listening and learning from the truth of the other. And this is the dialogical ethical competence Badiou (2009b) alluded to as the “possibility opened by the event” (p. 45). The next chapter takes on the significance of this possibility in the form of the ongoing irony between suspicion and dialogue. Suspicion moves conversations from “unreflective cynicism” (Arnett & Arneson, 1999) to an *evental hope*—making suspicion the existential home of dialogic question.

CHAPTER FOUR—Embodied-Situated Suspicion: The Dialogic of Difference

Epistemological prejudice addresses the question of how to recollect the past in the name of making the future. Its memory is fraught with the Renaissance contention of knowledge and the shifting subject of emotive doubt, suspicion. In the Renaissance, prejudice constituted a suspension of judgment that indemnified human perfection. To William Shakespeare, its gift was not endless suspension of judgment but a moment of human imperfectibility or “an awareness of moral false consciousness” which John Cox (2006) calls suspicion (p. 70). In Shakespeare, we see suspicion as a foundational dialogic process in an epistemic moral world of consciousness charged with both reflexivity and intersubjectivity. Shakespearean suspicion is dialogic in that it involves negotiating tensional core *epistemic endoxai*. In this sense, suspicion could be said to be synchronous with the creative force of prejudice in every dialogic conversation.

In order to bring some tangibility to the creative force of prejudice in communication ethics, this chapter explores Shakespeare’s epistemological assumptions in the context of suspicion so as to illustrate why and how suspicion is foundational to dialogue as a constitutive communicative problematic that embraces human imperfectibility as an invitation to the “first home of provinciality” (Arnett, 2008a, p. 71). This chapter situates the ongoing problematic in the context of sixteenth century English Renaissance epistemological skepticism, an epoch that anatomized the operation of reason and forced an ersatz community of commonality. Shakespeare resonates Glenn Tinder’s (1980) warning that “In truth, the idea that human beings are fundamentally good and innocent is surprisingly treacherous ... We do not simply experience frustration in searching for community. We come face-to-face with our finitude, our mortality, and our radical imperfection” (p. 9). Tinder’s warning guides this chapter as I explore grounded

bias as situated-embodied suspicion that enacts the possibility of coming to terms with the necessary dialectics in dialogue.

I argue in this chapter for a view of suspicion that directs attention to the heuristic reality of situatedness. This chapter first starts with a historical foundation of Shakespearean epistemological suspicion. Second, the chapter examines Shakespeare's epistemological paradigm, reflecting Shakespeare's thought about knowing. Third, this chapter the notion addresses Shakespeare's suspicion of human perfectibility and its relationship to hermeneutics of suspicion. The chapter concludes by offering a postmodern understanding of suspicion as a situated embodied dialogic phenomenon in the tradition of Merleau-Ponty (1962).

Foundations of Shakespeare's Epistemological Suspicion

Shakespeare's epistemological suspicion is rooted in sixteenth century skepticism, an era marked by a tyranny of disbelief due to a "shattered confidence" in what constituted the truth in both philosophy and theology (Jonsen & Toulmin, 1988, p. 148). Sixteenth century skepticism derives from the philosophical project of Sextus Empiricus. He describes skepticism as "an ability to place in antithesis, in any manner whatever, appearances and judgment, and thus—because of the quality of force in the objects and arguments opposed—to come first of all to a suspension of judgment and then to mental tranquility"(Empiricus, 1985, pp. 32-33). Skepticism, for Sextus, is a philosophical "psychoactive therapy"; it relieves the mind of the problematics of dogmatism, offering the mind peace through the suspension of judgment.

What is suspended in judgment is dogmatic truth, especially, the truth about appearances. For the example, a glass filled halfway with water might seem half full or full empty, and unemployment benefits might provide much needed care for those who cannot find work or stifle

job seekers. These conflicting views shatter confidence in what the truth is. Thus, the Skeptics' antidote: disowning knowledge of anything beyond appearance. By abandoning the demand for truth, a tyrannical consequence of dogmatic judgement, one is no longer held hostage to dogmatic judgment, but finds peace. Inherent in the transformation from being disturbed "at the irregularity of things" and where to place one's belief to acquiring mental tranquility is seeming knowledge, that is, saying what appears to one and reporting one's "own feeling, without indulging in opinion or making positive statements about the reality of things outside" of one's perception (Empiricus, 1985, p. 37).

With its roots in the Pyrrhonian skepticism of Sextus Empiricus, sixteenth century continental philosophy and theology saw "a revival of interest and concern with ancient skepticism, and with the application of its views to the problems of the day" (Popkin, 1979, p. xvi). The sixteenth century was riddled with the problem of knowledge, giving rise to its own variant of skepticism that is often attributed to Rene Descartes' principle of methodological doubt. But as Cavell (2003) notes, the skepticism shown in Descartes's philosophy "is all already in full existence in Shakespeare" (p. 3). Both Shakespeare and Descartes—who were responding to the intellectual crisis of the time, a result of the resurgence of Pyrrhonian skepticism—are believed to have been influenced by Michel de Montaigne, an avid reader of Sextus (see Cox, 2007, p. 227).

Drawing from the basic tenet of Pyrrhonian skepticism, Montaigne argued against sixteenth century dogmatism, making the claim that it is impossible to make rational conclusions about truth. Thus with his famous motto, "Ques sais-je"—"What can I know?" Montaigne question calls for embracing doubt with assurance. "It was doubt itself and the weakness of the human mind in discerning the meaning and connection of events that sustained such minds as

Montaigne's in a condition of precarious faith" (Bell, 2002, p. 15). Doubt, for Montaigne, was an integral aspect of the human condition (Bashaw, 2001). Thus, for Montaigne, human reason was misleading and should not be trusted. The principles that could be relied upon are divine revelation. Montaigne's point is that skepticism alerts us to the dangers of dogmatic judgement inherent in the humanistic philosophy of the time. It was a judgment that Pierre Bayle, a seventeenth century French philosopher described in a caricature term as a "sad intellectual plight":

It [reason] is a guide that leads one astray; and philosophy can be compared to some powders that are so corrosive that, after they have eaten away the infected flesh of a wound, they then devour the living flesh, rot the bones and penetrate the very marrow of the humanist philosophy on society. Philosophy at first refutes errors. But if it is not stopped at this point, it goes on to attack truths. And when it is left on its own, it goes so far that it no longer knows where it is and can find not stopping place. (Popkin, 2003, p. 288)

Montaigne (2003) called for a new philosophical language to address the inherent defectiveness of dogmatic judgement and human reason because "We ourselves, our faculty of judgment, and all mortal things are now flowing and rolling ceaselessly: nothing certain can be established about one from the other, since both judged and judging are ever shifting and changing" (p. 680). This vicious cycle of reasoning constitutes an epistemological disturbance. The new language of philosophy begins with disowning knowledge and transforms our thought process into an acknowledgment, seeming knowledge. This leads to an epistemic epiphany, mental quietude.

The mental quietude or tranquility that ensued from skepticism was no coincident. It was both an epistemic and a pragmatic necessity. After all, the Renaissance Period was laden with

noise. The problematics of dogmatism was restricted to the philosophical domain. It was theological as well. Questions began to arise about the source of divine authority, pitting Protestants against Catholics and the vice versa “to give way to another (science and human reason, a new social order)” (McGinn, 2006, p. 3). It is no accident, therefore, to find sixteenth philosophers like Descartes, Pierre Charron, and Blaise Pascal, to mention a few, raised questions and called for a paradigmatic shift in the philosophical approached to the signs of the time. Their questions and calls were inspired by Montaigne’s sustained interest in interrogating dogmatism with Pyrrhonian skepticism.

Shakespeare struggled with this epistemic turbulence. He lived in sixteenth century England, and was familiar with the intellectual crisis of the time, and “there is a more specific reason to link Shakespeare” to the philosophical trends of the time, Montaigne. He “was born in 1533, Shakespeare in 1564, and the French aristocrat was widely celebrated author when the English commoner was composing his famous plays” (p. 6). Scholars like George Taylor (1925), Millicent Bell (2002), Hugh Grady (2006), John Cox (2004, 2007), Collin McGinn (2006), Stephen Greenblatt (2014), and Peter Platt (2014), to mention a few, have drawn parallels between Shakespeare and Montaigne, arguing that Shakespeare knew the writings of Montaigne (especially his *Essays*). According to Bell (2002), Shakespeare

seems to have shared with Montaigne, his near-contemporary, not only general doubts of what had long been assumed about the universe and mankind but also doubt concerning the reliability of our own power to perceive and conclude anything. Montaigne’s ideas, expressed in the famous essays Shakespeare certainly read, became a repeated reference ... of a general skeptical viewpoint emerging in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (p. x)

A detailed discussion of the historical lineage between Shakespeare and Montaigne is beyond the scope of this work. I do however, think that there are compelling reasons to make the assertion that the skeptical thought that runs through Shakespeare's work is about doubt. The issue, however, is what kind of doubt? Is it a doubt propelled by what Cavell (1988) described as "philosophy's discovery of the limitation of human knowledge" (p. 5)? This doubt, which Cavell (2003) suggests is a form of skepticism raises "The question whether I know with certainty of the existence of the external world and of myself and of others in it" (p. 3). According to Cox (2007), the skepticism which characterized the Shakespearean period Cavell speaks of suggests that 'suspicion' is a more accurate term ... than 'skepticism'" (p. 26). Sixteen century England was a time of (Elizabethan) epistemological crisis, grounding "Shakespeare's suspicion of human perfectibility" (p. 15). Shakespeare framed his response to the crisis around the assumption that human imperfectibility made ethical relationships problematic.

The problem of human imperfectibility is its proclivity for "false consciousness," and the tandem efforts of its corollary companion, self-deception calls for a hermeneutics of suspicion to uncover concealed meanings under apparent meanings (Kearney, 1990) in human (communicative) relationships. Karl Marx located false consciousness in socio-economic ideology. Nietzsche theorized it as a profound nebulous negation of life. Freud saw it as the underlying hidden motivations and desires of people. All three "masters of suspicion," as Ricoeur would call them, sensed the tyranny of false consciousness and how it socially and economically, genealogically and ethically, and psychologically estranged people from their ground of conviction.

Ricoeur believed that suspicion animates both critique and understanding. Critique with understanding is attentive and understanding with critique is responsive. Thus, the hermeneutics

of suspicion is both attentive and responsive to the “*what* of the particulars about which one” encounters “in relation to the spatiotemporal schema that contains it” (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 32). The hermeneutics of suspicion engages understanding to interrogate false consciousness

This work situates Shakespeare’s epistemological paradigm in Ricoeur’s postmodern hermeneutics of suspicion. A postmodern approach to Shakespeare’s epistemological paradigm makes sense historically as well as hermeneutically, because of the deep mistrust of human nature that gave rise to early modern skepticism in the first place. In other words, while the development of skepticism remained primitive by the Enlightenment standards in Shakespeare’s lifetime, the suspicion of human nature was very old and highly developed, and it touches postmodern suspicion in important ways. (Cox, 2007, pp. 10-11)

Shakespeare’s suspicion begins with a postmodern assumption, situated within Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of suspicion (see Cox, 2007, pp. 11-12). Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of suspicion is otherwise than routine suspicion. It both an *interpretive action* as well as an *interpreting otherwise*. The hermeneutics of suspicion is an interpretive action because it is a pragmatic communicative interpretation, offering a narrative that contends with fundamental prejudice. As interpretive otherwise, the hermeneutics of suspicion interrogates the subject-object dialectics, not as a negative dialectics, but as “creative tension,” leading to a “constructive use of suspicion” (Scott-Baumann, 2009, p. 21). It is the interplay of the interpretive action and interpreting otherwise that frames Shakespeare’s suspicion as a communicative discernment process with an interrogative impulse.

Communicative discernment is introspective, permitting attentiveness to the existential and phenomenological everydayness—habits of the heart—with suspicion within enthymematic

encounters. Accordingly, it is within these enthymematic encounters that suspicion becomes for Shakespeare a Foucauldian turn away from an *annulled self* to a *transfigured self*. The annulled self is evasive and takes shelter in ideology. The transfigured self, through introspection, *seizes the phenomenological opportunity* “for renewal and redemption” (Cox, 2007, p. 37) with “cautionary conviction” (Arnett, 2005, p. 52) rather than an originative and therapeutic conviction “in hopes of discerning temporal answers in daily communicative social life” (p. 53). Foucault offers insight into discerning temporal answers, “inventing a mode of subjectification in which this ethos would be a practice of thought formed in direct contact with” the signs of the time (Rabinow, 1997). Ethos as practice thought situates suspicion within a confessional humility which “tempers” (Arnett, 2005) the ontological comfort and assurances of false consciousness.

Confessional humility works in tandem with acknowledging human imperfectibility. According to Cox (2007) Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labor’s Lost* and *Measure for Measure* rests on confessional humility, a moral derivative of suspicion (of motives). In the two plays, Shakespeare draws upon Jesus’s teaching in Matthew 7:3-4 and Luke 6:41-42, and Matthew 18:23-27, narratives about duplicity to frame the problem of self-deception and the “hypocrisy of abusive power” prevalent in sixteen century Elizabethan culture. The point of these narratives, via Shakespeare’s plays

is not only that people impose intolerable burdens on one another, but a potential solution exists in willingness to acknowledge one’s own failure and to forgive on the other: “So likewise shall mine heavenly Father do unto you, except ye forgive from your hearts, each one to his brother their trespasses” (Matt 18:35). Even a desultory Elizabethan churchgoer would have heard in this story, and especially in

its conclusion, an echo of the frequently recited “Lord’s prayer,” as translated in the *Book of Common Prayer*: “and forgives us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us” ... This brief survey suggests ... the ... narratives Shakespeare’s culture offered for suspecting human motives and actions. (Cox, 2007, p. 38)

Acknowledgment and its corollary invitation to/for forgiveness is central to suspicion; it is the “good life-giving” side of communicative relationships. Foucault’s metaphor of “transfiguration” points to the notion of suspicion as (good) life-giving. For Foucault (1997), “transfiguration entails ... a difficult interplay between the truth of what is real and the exercise of freedom ... to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable, and to determine the precise form this change should take” (pp. 311-316). The possibility for change begins, for Foucault, by defining “the conditions in which human beings ‘problematize’ what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live” (Rabinow, 1997, p. xxxvi). Shakespeare problematized the human conditions of the Elizabethan era by suggesting that suspicion begins not in routine skepticism, but in the confessional acknowledgment of human imperfectibility. Suspicion makes human imperfectibility an ethical reality, and requires a reflexivity that engages uncertainty of the self and others.

Shakespeare’s Existential—Ethical Paradigm

Suspicion requires dialogic reflexivity that engages the uncertainty of otherness. Shakespeare works from an epistemological background that seeks to meet the other in a sixteenth century world of mistrust, “suspicious of human perfectibility” (Cox, 2007, p. 15). Human perfectibility makes obvious the problem of self-deception or moral false consciousness.

Colin McGinn (2006), a British philosopher situates self-deception in “the problem of other minds.” McGinn writes,

This is a multifaceted problem, but its most straightforward statement is simply this: How do we know what other people are thinking, feeling, and intending? Can we know these things? The problem arises from a basic duality in human nature—the split between interior and exterior... There is something hidden about other people’s minds, which we can only infer from what is publicly available... and this puts us in position of not knowing. (p. 7)

The problem of the other mind presumes asymmetrical relationships. These asymmetrical relationships generate oppositions and contradictions which make “self-deception possible” (McGinn, 2006, p. 7). Shakespeare was inured to this problematic. Shakespeare worked out this problematic as it affects people locked into exaggerated self-confidence, evident in the character of Julius Caesar, whose “constant harping on his flawless valor,” MacCallum called self-deception (Cox, 2013, p. 41).

Self-deception can be said to be an epistemological opacity that breeds communicative tragedy (Bell, 2002). For Shakespeare, the tragedy is the disengaged, self-absorbed individual like Iago who “knows quite well what is on his mind,” but led Othello to always guess him (Iago) wrongly (McGinn, 2006, p. 60). Self-deception closes spaces of encounter with others through manipulation or a *know it all attitude*. Shakespeare presents self-deception as epistemic manipulation, a powerful, resourceful means of dominating and controlling relationships.

The role of manipulation in self-deception is central to postmodern ethical project of dialogic relationality. Buber’s philosophy of dialogue illustrates the importance of reciprocity as an existential responsiveness to otherness. Buberian reciprocity involves the courage to engage

the unknown other. Self-deception, on the other hand, disengages the unknown while offering the ethereal hope of communicative collaboration, negotiation, transaction, and relation (Stewart, 1994, p. xiii). Self-deception is at odds with the courage to confront the void before us. In the words of Baird, the Buberian notion of reciprocity involves the courage to face the void before us and understand the facing as a communicative relational activity. Like Heidegger's aphorism, "being is linguisticity," Buber's: reciprocity is risky-*ality*, and involves "transcending 'vulgar conscience'" through a wholistic response to the unknown other (Stewart, 1996, p. 152). Shakespeare's Othello best exemplifies Buber's notion of vulgar conscience. For example, although Iago appeared honest to Othello, Emilia, and Emilia, to mention a few, at base he (Othello) was dishonest of them. This movement toward vulgar conscience, indicative of his emotive-induced relationality, led to the ethical abdication of his responsibility towards his so-called acquaintances.

There can be no meaningful interaction among people without a committed sense of responsibility toward each other (Buber, 1949, p. 135). Iago, in his dishonesty, became attached to what could be described as a Buberian stasis, "reflexion"—a monologue trammelled propelled by the "therapeutic I"—elected to manipulate others to achieve his desired end. Manipulation can lead to an "evil impulse" (Buber, 1958, p. 42) as the individual becomes the self-absorbed Nietzschean superman who trades heavily on his genealogical impenetrability. The end result is relational disintegration (see Buber, 1958). Without a hermeneutics of suspicion, knowledge and trust become subsumed by a sense of "epistemological anxiety" (McGinn, 2006).

Epistemological anxiety can, in turn, lead to "unnecessary interpersonal surveillance":

In such an environment, we no longer meet life on its own terms. We manufacture a response that is beyond what is called for or we ignore what others say as we

offer our attributed “real” answer of depth and insight...Persons are able to convince themselves about the reality of something that, in actuality, never happened. Lying to ourselves fuels an environment prone to unnecessary interpersonal struggles, each person fighting imaginary actions and cynically rejecting the other’s perspective while unknowingly fabricating one’s own position. (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, pp. 16-17)

Considering epistemological anxiety in this sense can lead to totalitarian dogmatism as one becomes dismissive of the viewpoints of others. Dismissiveness precipitate disconnectedness. Dismissiveness involves “an intentional and proactive filter of disconfirmation and even dogmatism that essentially represents the dismissive speaker as situationally invulnerable to the entreaties of others” (Anderson & Cissna, 2008, p. 266). Dismissiveness levels the epistemic home of the other. By epistemic home is meant “grounded conviction.” Arnett describes it “as a commonplace to turn to for guidance.” Grounded conviction also prompts the “moral mandate of service to Others” (Arnett, 2005, p. 107). Without grounded conviction, deception invades the truth of others, disconfirming their radical alterity. This insight is at the core of Shakespeare’s plays and comedies.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the mandate of deputyship—service to others—(Bonhoeffer, 1955) trumps self-deception. Proteus—a name indicative of duplicity in classical legend—displays a remarkable sense of self-deception by grounding his betrayal of his friends—Julia, his sweetheart, and Valentine, his close friend, whose sweetheart, Silvia, Proteus has amorous feelings for—“in the language of friendship” (Masten, 1999, p. 209). Proteus conceals himself from the circle of friends. Proteus perversely garners a noble accolade. He is “complete in feature and in mind with all good grace to grace a gentleman” (Shakespeare, 1997, 2.4.73-74).

Defying just about all the basic characteristics of dialogue, outlined in Anderson and Cissna's *Communication and the Ground of Dialogue* (1994)—and immediacy of presence, emergent unanticipated consequences, recognition of strange otherness, collaborative orientation, vulnerability, mutual implication, temporal flow, genuineness, and authenticity (pp. 13-15)—Proteus tells Valentine, “I to myself, I am dearer than a friend (2.6.23). Proteus plots against Valentine, the Duke, and slanders Valentine with hopes of wooing Silvia: “I cannot now prove constant to myself without some treachery us'd to Valentine” (2.6.31-32). And Proteus slights his sweetheart, Julia, calling her “a swarthy Ethiop,” a racial slur (2.6.26). Proteus' duplicity, a craft of self-deception accomplished through an act of vulgar conscience. As Buber (1999) said,

The vulgar conscience that knows admirably well how to torment and harass, but cannot arrive at the ground and abyss of guilt, is inescapable, to be sure, of summoning to such responsibility. For this summoning, a greater conscience is needed, one that does not shy away from the glance into the depths and that already in admonishing envisages the way that leads across it. (pp. 124-125)

Shakespeare countered vulgar conscience by drawing attention to the culture of “Renaissance pride” (Ferne, 2002, p. 147) in the everyday social discourse of sixteen century England. Through his plays and comedies, Shakespeare invited his audience to the pragmatic importance of existential introspection. Within the spirit of existential introspection is a communicative habit, suspicion—in the Ricoeurian hermeneutical tradition—that challenges human motives and problematizes false consciousness and its communicative bad faith consequence, self-deception.

Suspicion confronts self-deception with a phenomenological, existential necessity, trust. Like Maurice Friedman (1972), who called for “existential trust” as “the courage to address and respond” (p. 322), suspicion is the courage to address and respond to the monologic opacity of

self-deception. Shakespeare works point to the interrelations between trust and suspicion, and in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (and *Othello*), Shakespeare sets the relationship against the epistemological problem of self-deception. For Shakespeare, suspicion resides in the form of grounded conviction, a commonplace to turn to for guidance to address and respond to the signs of the time (see Arnett, 2005, pp. 104-108).

Address and response is a form of dialogic reflexivity that acknowledges the self, not as a “self-proclaimed” expert who locates “the good within the self” only (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 114), like Iago, Shakespeare’s Nietzschean superman, but as a reflexive self that is accepting of multiplicity (see Stewart, 1995). Shakespeare’s project seems to unmask the epistemological dangers of the self-absorbed individual, offering instead an epistemic view that fuels questions critical of metanarratives and the growing power of dogmatism. The questions generate an awareness, suspicion.

Part of my aim in this chapter is to work out exactly what Shakespeare’s view was, insofar as it is represented in prejudice at the intersection of dialogue and communication ethics. Shakespeare is not swayed by dogma or tradition. His epistemology counsels a proper suspicion about human pretensions to knowledge, and distrusts of the notion of the self-absorbed individual. Shakespeare’s project expresses one of the deepest and most enduring philosophical problematic of the Renaissance, i.e., knowledge, which is addressed as an epistemological suspicion and responded to as hermeneutics of suspicion. Shakespeare’s notion of suspicion exposes reality for what it is, undermines dogma and complacency. In the end, of course, this is nothing other than a dedication to prejudice as a concept that acknowledges human imperfectibility.

Hermeneutics of Suspicion and Human Imperfectibility

Shakespeare's notion of suspicion points to dialogic reflexivity as a resource for unmasking and acknowledging human imperfection. Dialogic reflexivity comes with an epistemic confession, "one never reaches the reality of the other. Reality cannot be derived, it is simply given, to be acknowledge, to be rejected, but never to be established by proofs, and is given only to the moral person as whole" (Arnett, 2005, p. 71). The moral person for Shakespeare is the reflexive self that acknowledges its imperfection, thus opening up opportunities for listening to and critiquing with understanding. Shakespeare offers a full account of suspicion as a dialogic self-reflexive act that seeks its epistemological forms in the dialectical meeting of minds.

The dialectical meeting of minds is a tensional problematic of human imperfection and perfection, an epistemic gap between individual ground and the realm of otherness which is only bridged through self-reflexive. For Shakespeare, self-reflexivity is essential for a hermeneutic approach to suspicion. It brings us face to face with human imperfectibility and an acknowledgment of this imperfection. A hermeneutics of suspicion shares with human imperfectibility the necessity of self-reflexivity, which mirrors Husserl's (2012) notion of "phenomenological Reductions,' setting "aside the limitations to knowledge essentially involved in every nature-directed form of investigation, deflecting the restricted line of vision proper to it, until we have eventually before us the free outlook upon 'transcendentally' purified phenomena" (p. 3). This phenomenological reductions call guides the individual to address and response to the problem of the self in relation to other minds. In other words, the self is awakened to a new way (outlook) and approach to its interaction with the world, reminding us that dialogue begins in an awakening: selves wake to a phenomenological daylight, with human

fragility staring them in the face and so unable to hold themselves aloof from the cliché *to err is human*. This awakening is key to Shakespeare's notion of human imperfection. The selves are alerted to the dangers of deception, an epistemological problematic that eventually evolved into the crass belief that saying "we are on the same page" is tantamount to honesty, agreement means openness, and difference is an aberration of sameness. It is this phenomenological lie and epistemological tension that characterized Shakespeare's world and plays. What Shakespeare brings to this *mono-hetero epistemic tension* is the necessity of suspicion.

Questioning is a crucial aspect of suspicion. As Gadamer (1975/1989) said, "We cannot have experience without asking questions. Recognizing that an object is different, and not as we first thought, obviously presupposes the question whether it was this or that" (p. 356). Gadamer valorized genuine questioning as key to gaining insight into the different other. Insight in a hermeneutics of suspicion, is an enlarged mentality that is attentive to the uncertainty of the other, an otherness that cannot be grasp (see Ricoeur, 1981, pp. 182-183). Shakespeare's spin on suspicion triggers a questioning that is respectful of uncertainty as a different other beyond understanding. Uncertainty, for Shakespeare is a paradoxical phenomenon of seeming knowledge; sometimes it draws selves into trusting relationship—hoping to know other selves, and at other times it invites selves to "question the absoluteness of" their "ideas and the validity of" their "impressions in the most radical way" (p. 3). This paradox, akin to Gadamer's dialectics, is ground for acknowledging differed viewpoints.

Human imperfection, steep in narcissistic egoism, breeds self-deception. Self-deception creates an epistemic smoke screen which allows "the soul of the other" to remain "systematically elusive" (McGinn, 2006, p. 71), leading to an epistemological anxiety. Human imperfection does not only foment epistemological anxiety but also fuels monologic singularity which perpetuates

the tyranny of the disengaged self. The disengaged self is apathetic to otherness. James Hatley (2000) describes monologic singularity as a “narcissistic mirror” obsessed with the communication of one’s “own vision, so that one’s history only articulates one’s own concerns, one’s own needs” (2000, p. 63). The anticipated aim of the disengaged self is “the accumulation of experience rather than awareness of the situation of communication with others” (Arnett, 2007b, p. 119). The disengaged self reifies imperfection as normative, rendering dogmatic judgments that undermine difference.

In reifying imperfection, the disengaged self makes claim to infallibility (and invincibility). This kind of self-deception is depicted in Shakespeare’s plays and comedies as “an ironic vision of ethical folly... and of epistemological confusion” (Hassel Jr, 1980, p. 215) that needs revisioning. This revisioning is evident in the metaphors of “mastered self” (Soellner, 1972) and “self-discovery” (Jorgensen, 1967). The two metaphors are both an indicator and a basis of a hermeneutics of suspicion that works against unbridled confidence in false consciousness. The metaphors of mastered self and self-discovery also suggest an epistemic discernment with a moral underpinning, self-knowledge. For Shakespeare,

Self-knowledge connoted self-control or temperance in all things, patience and humility. To us, and doubtless to Shakespeare, self-knowledge implies the wisdom essential to right conduct, the ability to distinguish, as Socrates, says, “between what one can do and what one cannot do,” and hence “obtain what is good and guard against what is evil.” (Jenkins, 1963, p. 86; cited in Jorgensen, 1967, p. 4)

This epistemic discernment emergent from “the Socratic assimilation of ... virtue to knowledge or wisdom” (Guthrie, 1981, p. 348), becomes a pathway to authenticity. A pathway to

authenticity, in this sense, resonates with Heidegger's awakening—an alertness that motivates being to elect to move away from inauthenticity in search of authentic existence. In essence, it is breaking through from an ethereal world of false consciousness to self-consciousness.

Authenticity becomes a breakthrough and an acknowledgement of one's ground. It is suspicion that precipitates this acknowledgement, making way for an existential turnaround with focus on self-reflexivity.

The existential turnaround for Shakespeare is essentially a self-reflexivity that reconnects the individual to its ethical responsibility. It is a rediscovery of the self, not as disengaged but “derivative”—to sound Buberian. This rediscovered derivative self becomes responsive. Shakespeare pays tribute to the rediscovered self in his plays and comedies grounded in a realistic understanding of human nature. Shakespeare reminds his audience through the characters in his plays and comedies that the disengaged self is capable of transformation. Calvin Schrag (2003) offers a postmodern rendition of Shakespeare's transformed self in his exploration of the “decentered self.”

The decentered self rediscovers itself through the acknowledgement of a lack of grounded conviction and its damaging consequence, disconnectedness. In decentering, duplicity and pretensions to exhaustive knowledge are questioned. The end result, however discomfiting to the disengaged self, is a renewed self with a new hermeneutical horizon, transporting the renewed, rediscovered self into a new communicative sphere. Like Shakespeare, Schrag reconfigures the self as a responsive and responsible self. Shakespeare's depiction of his characters' self-reflexivity is identical to the decentered self. Shakespeare's characters emerge in his plays and comedies as selves acquiring their identity in a process of *becoming*. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare depicts this *becoming* in Prospero. He “controls his passions and

renounces the magic of unlimited power,” acknowledges “his weakness, the weakness of being human” (Soellner, 1972, p. 382).

[Prospero’s] future power to transform the world and to master others will lie not in the magician’s wand, not in a power over nature, not in Machiavellian schemes, but in a strength, that radiates from a mastered self. There are good reasons to believe that Prospero will retain his mastery and become the fortunate man that his name implies—good *human* reasons. (pp. 382-383)

The mastered self marks an *existential becoming*, a transition toward a new beginning. A hermeneutic of suspicion is the site for this new beginning. Suspicion offers openings for transformation. To paraphrase Ricoeur (1986), a hermeneutics of suspicion without transformation is meaningless, and a self-reflexivity without transformation is futile (see p. 237). The hermeneutics of suspicion is tied to a “distrust of symbols as a dissimulation of the real and is animated by suspicion” (Josselson, 2004, p. 3). Self-deception is characterized by dissimulation. From the context of Shakespeare’s sixteenth century what is concealed is human imperfection, often masqueraded as perfection. Suspicion, on the hand, is characterized by an *opening to interactive listening*.

The entire thrust of Shakespeare’s project is suspicion driven by self-reflexivity. It is the courage to address and respond to self-deception. The end result is a self-disclosure that freely relates to others and accepts difference. Thus, as said earlier, suspicion requires dialogic reflexivity that engages the uncertainty of otherness. Suspicion, in this case, becomes a dialogic competent act of questioning and reflecting upon oneself and relationship with other selves, opening the self to enthymematic listening to others, otherness and difference otherwise than a syllogistic demand for formulaic proceduralism. As dialogic self-reflexivity, suspicion

recognizes and engages juxtapositions. Such a view of suspicion privileges the inevitability of prejudice.

Shakespeare's hermeneutics of suspicion is a summary statement on dialogue and its relationship to prejudice. The basic idea of genuine dialogue is an openness to narratives of the different other. Gadamer's notion of genuine dialogue is within the coordinates of self-reflexivity because it calls for acknowledging the biased ground—which in the context of this chapter would include the disclosure of human fallibility—that one brings to a dialogic conversation. Tied to the notion of suspicion, genuine dialogue involves openness. This openness, a derivative of self-reflectivity, alerts the individual to reified small-town values as an *ersatz* petite narrative to abandon and choose instead a community of welcome that privileges the meeting and engagement of difference. I call the community of welcome a heteroglossic sanctuary where suspicion “opens up a path that leads to the dismantling of the metaphysical idol of absolute truth” (di Cesare, 2013, p. 102). Shakespeare demythologizes this metaphysical idol represented in the monologic impositions of disengaged self. In his plays and comedies, Shakespeare's disengaged self starts off as preoccupied only with its own survival and is unresponsive to difference, but ends up making an existential turnaround: admission of fallibility, of prejudice, and being respectful of the ground of the other.

The interplay between suspicion and human fallibility stresses dialogic self-reflexivity. Discursive interaction is not an existential ideal; it is a necessary human communicative praxis which begins not in “monologic vacuum” (Holba, 2008)—a reminder of the danger of self-deception, but in the acknowledgement of the grounds of conviction. With an acknowledgement of the tainted ground of conviction, self-deception trumps self-reflectivity, false consciousness subsumes self-consciousness, and that *sensus communis* should be seen as a precondition for

discursive interaction. Suspicion takes into account the dialectics of everyday life through sensitivity and sensibility to the self and the other, ever attentive to human fallibility. Suspicion works not from within judgment—standing above history and ground to judge; rather it works from within caution without losing traction under our feet.

The place of suspicion as that which structures and illuminates the negotiation of difference must be examined more closely so that the connections between suspicion and dialogue can be seen more clearly. In doing so, however, a turn to the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1962), whose work on embodiment provides the framework to make this connection clearer. Accordingly, with the help of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy we can show how it is possible to reconceive suspicion as an embodied-situated dialogic encounter.

The Embodiment of Suspicion

Embodiment offers insight into the illuminative nature of suspicion. In his essay, *Merleau-Pontian Phenomenology as Non-Conventionally Utopian*, Greg Johnson (2003) defines embodiment as “the movement of transcendent” with phenomenological consequences: becoming, interrupting, and transforming (p. 390). This is a reminder similar to the interruptive and transformative nature of the Christ event in Alain Badiou's understanding of the subjective and personal nature of the truth in Saint Paul's notion of universalism (as discussed in the previous chapter). The ultimate outcome of the event is not petite narratives or truths reified into an ethic of universal generality, but an ethics of universal singularity that promotes locative truths. Common to Johnson's description of embodiment and Badiou's understanding of the Christ event is a concern for the struggle for vernacular expressions under “lived ambiguities.” And it is in the struggle for vernacular expressions that suspicion is born.

For purposes of this chapter embodiment is considered a pathway to discovery as the self moves and transitions from its disengaged self to a decentered subject. What propels the movement and the transition is suspicion. From a phenomenological perspective suspicion “questions what it means to live authentically ... How ... can we live with a personal sense of freedom, integrity, and self-fulfillment that does not promote self-indulgence or eclipse the well-being of “Self” and “Others?” (Eicher-Catt, 2005, p. 114). This quote points to the self as embodied reflexivity inherent in interactive action. Embodied reflexivity becomes a bridge that links the self to the other. The bridge emerges within an interactive action, intercorporeality of human beings, opening the self to new *transcendence-driven* communicative possibilities—becoming, interruption, and transformation—grounded in embodiment.

With Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, suspicion is engaged as an embodied reflexive praxis. In other words, suspicion becomes a site for discernment (becoming), questioning lived ambiguities (interruption), and responding to the signs of the time (transformation), which in postmodernity involves an engagement with difference. Merleau-Ponty talks of embodied reflexivity as an “originate reflection,” a radical reflection present in everyday human communicative practice (Schrage, 1980, p. 72). Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) radical reflection is grounded in an existential-phenomenological understanding of reflexivity. Radical reflection is “a creative operation which itself participates in the facticity of that [unreflective] experience” (p. 61). The creative operation opens the self to its original past, “a past which has never been present” (p. 242) in an attempt to uncover the hidden and the apparent that give meaning to the lived ambiguities.

In addition, embodied suspicion, prompts the self toward what Heidegger (1962) calls “existential positivity,” a deceit and error which opens the self to “a modification of original

being-in” (p. 62; cited in Wrathall, 2011, p. 60). In deceit, suspicion prompts radical reflection and questioning which in turn lead to seeing “something essential about the nature of the world and the things we encounter in the world—namely, that they are not objective and determinate” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 61). Existential positivity points us toward “ambiguous transcendence” (Young, 1990), necessitating reflection and response that begins with the question, *what is?* The question assumes a sense of “confession” (Arnett, 2005) that is possible through reflexive acts of embodied selves.

What embodied suspicion brings to the self and human relationship or communication is what Charles Taylor (1991) calls “a voice within,” “inner depths,” and “new forms of inwardness” which situates the self as embodied authenticity (p. 26). The authentic self is similar to Schrag’s decentered self who, through embodied reflexivity, questions “reified static concepts” (Arnett, 2005) as an essential problematic of the self and the other. At this threshold of embodied suspicion, the contemplative self is awakened to “immediate, affective, intersubjective connection” with difference (Kruks, 2006, p. 44).

An important point to remember about embodied suspicion is resilience. In *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (1993), Robert Jay Lifton connects the Protean self to the threat of despondency in our contemporary world. Rather give in to cynicism, Lifton calls on individuals to emulate the resilience of the Greek god Proteus, who respond to the problematics of the time. Embodied suspicion *potentiates* the self in a “world come of age” (Arnett, 2005). Like the Greek god Proteus, embodied suspicion reminds the individual of the necessity of meeting a “world come of age.” Embodied suspicion can also be considered through the Merleau-Ponty’s operative intentionality, “I can” (p. 137). From the standpoint of communicative praxis, “I can” is a reflexive process of human consciousness and experience

which compels the self to *potentiate* ethical relationships in as dialogic productivity, not monologic aggressivity. My thinking here is not oblivious to the limits of the bodily experience—for example, intentionality becoming inhibited (see Johnson, 2003; Young, 1990)—under tyrannical conditions. The claim I want to make, rather, is that embodied suspicion communicates the potential for possibility inherent in the self. The key to this possibility is the authentic self. Herein lies the illuminative nature of suspicion; it interrupts an inauthentic self, transforms a disengaged self. The end result is a becoming, decentered, listening self “capable of entering into a multiplicity of relations without losing itself (Merleau-Ponty, 1967, p. 118). Embodied suspicion opens the rediscovered, sublimated self to a rhetorical call to respond to the difference of the other.

From a Merleau-Pontian perspective, Shakespearean suspicion is a reflexive embodied act characterized by a “plurality of meanings” (Silverman, 1997, p. 79). Shakespeare responded to Renaissance’s humanist epistemology that disavowed individual knowledge and discursive encounters, and obliterated difference. Embodied suspicion celebrates the individuality and authenticity. Together they present the possibility of a “listening, thinking being” (Lipari, 2010). This points to diminishing “the dualism between self and at the same time” increasing “the awareness of emptiness,” otherness, and uncertainty (p. 350). It is within the listening, thinking being that embodied suspicion becomes a reflexive embodied act of listening-rhetorically decentered subjects.

Within the spirit of Shakespeare’s epistemological assumptions, embodied suspicion rejects narcissistic forms of the self that results in methodological self-absorption to derivative freedom. Without thinking through the embodied and situated dimensions of suspicion, human communication runs the risk of presenting difference as naïve, disinterested and pathological.

Such a risk is evident in modernity's indictment of individuality. The next chapter focuses on individuality not as a therapeutic self, but as a derivative self. In Kierkegaard's notion of irony, I demonstrate that the *ethical, responsible* self is justification for departing from absolute searches, and is the starting point for an ethics of dialogic practice.

CHAPTER FIVE—Dialogic Irony: The Ethical Single Individual

The previous chapter brought some tangibility to the creative force of prejudice in communication ethics by exploring Shakespeare's epistemological assumptions and dialogue in the context of suspicion so as to illustrate why and how suspicion is foundational to dialogue as a constitutive communicative problematic that embraces human imperfectability. This chapter situates the ongoing problematic in the context of modernity's prejudice against individuality by employing the metaphor "dialogic irony" from the philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard to substantiate the relevancy of the tainted ground. Kierkegaard saw the existential presuppositions of modernity as symptoms of a deep, historical and cultural assault on individuality.

Modernity, according to Kierkegaard, (1996) was an "*age of disintegration*—an age of crisis" (p. 350) that pitted the progressive self against the "single individual." The individual, rhetorically construed, became an atomized unit of "compliance, dominance, inducement, and submission" (Burke, 1984). Kierkegaard, foreshadowed Francois Lyotard's call to wage a war against modernity, in order to preserve the ethical self, individuality—the ethically responsible "single individual." The new single individual emerges out of "irony"—a "quantification of subjectivity" (Kierkegaard, 1989, p. 264), marking the advent of the "plurality of publics" (Arendt, 1998).

Kierkegaard was a lived irony. His life and interaction with the signs of the time highlighted irony as a communicative *becoming* in the context of a socially constructed world of homogeneity that considered *otherwise*—the different other individual subject—as a "spoiled identity." The *becoming* necessitates an awakening, giving courage to the individual to resist conformity, such as the Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*, that blur the distinction between individuality and totality, the provincial and the cosmopolitan, the self and the other. Kierkegaard's irony insulates

the individual against hegemonic monopoly. This chapter examines the communicative implicature of Kierkegaard's work through the metaphor of dialogic irony. For Kierkegaard, without irony, human life would be meaningless. First, I situate the legacy of Kierkegaard, especially how the historical context affected his philosophical and his existential worldview of the individual as irreducibly subjective. Second, I look at what Kierkegaard calls leveling, modernity's assault on individuality. Third, I look at how Kierkegaard uses the concept of irony, an existential communicative praxis, for interrogating leveling. Finally, I conclude by suggesting the dialogic relevance of the Kierkegaardian project.

Kierkegaard's Legacy

Kierkegaard's work and life were an existential and ethical response to the nineteenth century Danish world steeped in Hegelian Lutheranism. "Danish Lutheranism, a part of the Danish state, made becoming Christian one component of Danish citizenship rather than a unique individual task" (Jøthen, 2014, p. 2) At this threshold of control, Kierkegaard questioned what it means to live by the authentic life, "the true shape of selfhood" (p. 2). How, in other words, can the individual live a life of freedom without acting according to the ideals of the Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*?

Kierkegaard's questioning of conformity emphasizes the importance of subjective individuality as the ground for ethical conviction. His response to the signs of the time point to postmodernity's concern for the struggle for an "ethics of self-expression" (Herder, 2001/2) under the totalizing structure of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* (and its handmaid, Hegelian Lutheranism) and modernity. Kierkegaard (1992) considers the modern era an age that "had forgotten what it

means to exist, and what inwardness signifies” (p. 223). This idea is grounded upon Kierkegaard’s belief that *subjective individuality* is constitutive of genuine existence.

Between the world of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* and Hegelian Lutheranism, on the one hand, and the world of modernity, on the other hand, lies “the errors of dogmatism” (de Beauvoir, 1948) that stymies individual freedom. Simone de Beauvoir draws attention to the problem of freedom in modernity, describing attempts to annihilate individual freedom as foreign absolutist impositions which the postmodern “genuine [wo]man” rejects because s/he “bears the responsibility for a world which is not the work of a strange power,” but of the subjective ethical individual (see pp. 14 and 16). For Kierkegaard, the individual freedom is living genuine existence independent of the Hegelian and modern absolutist conviction that truth is conformity, a direct communication from the powers that be. Genuine existence involves the individual capability to discern truth *qua* subjectivity or inwardness.

Kierkegaard’s project brings to modernity existential inwardness: the individual turns toward the self and its passions, not to become self-absorbed, but to be awakened to a new orientation—heeding to an individual response toward a world not as a knower but as a listener. Kierkegaard’s inwardness alludes to listening as an existential competent act of the subjective thinker who “*becomes*” a “*dwelling place*” whence the individual offers its “ethical response,” “hospitality (Lipari, 2010, p. 350) and engagement with other thinking narrative selves. In short, listening is a subjective act of the free individual with a renewed responsibility to engage the truth of the self and the other.

Listening brings the individual to the truths of the time, including an awakening to the repressive conditions that tether the individual to a reified *sensus communis*. It is through listening that the self becomes a subjective individual who comes to terms with its truth as well as the

truth of the other. It is possible to describe this experience as a “transformation that is determined by the self-interestedly relating to the truth by desiring to become it. Subjectivity is then about the self-truth relation ... Consequently ... relating is the truth of subjectivity” (Jøthen, 2014, p. 155).

Modernity, for Kierkegaard (1967-1978), interpreted the ethical as “scholarship and science” (p. 269). Andrew Herrmann (2008) frames this very clearly: “One of Kierkegaard’s complaints about modern philosophy was that academics come to learn so much about ethics as a field that they forget that the primary task of the individual is to live, enact, and bring into being an authentic and ethical life” (p. 77). Kierkegaard believes that the ethical communicates “oughtness-capability” rather than knowledge (Kierkegaard, 1967-1978, p. 285). By way of illustration, Kierkegaard speaks of a corporal in the military.

The military assumes that every country lad who comes into military service possesses the necessary capacities to be able to stick it out. Therefore, he is first of all examined so that there be no difficulties in this respect ... Now the communication begins. The corporal does not explain to the soldier what it is to drill, etc.: he communicates it to him as an art, he teaches him to use military militarily the abilities and the potential competence he already has. (p. 269)

The individual is inherently capable. What is needed is teasing out of the individual oughtness-capability. For Kierkegaard, then, subjective individuality and ethical capability go hand in hand. However, the Hegelian philosophy that dominated the Danish religious state of Kierkegaard’s time was dismissive of particularities and individuals. Kierkegaard considered modernity, epitomized in nineteenth century Denmark as emblematic of the problem of conformity and uniformity. Kierkegaard believed that in his confrontation with Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* and its

influence on the signs of the time, he was battling against the structures of religious faith, dogmatic truths, and political actions that were bent on abstract power.

Kierkegaard's project provides a way to think about the single ethical individual as a primordial expression of one's tainted ground. For Kierkegaard, without an individual ground of conviction, selves situate truth within collective power. Thus, the fantasy of collective advancement, rather than subjective individuality comes to define "common sense." This was the world Kierkegaard lived in. It was a world that framed epistemological and existential truth within collective power. Kierkegaard was critical of modernity's fascination with collective advancement. "According to him there, cannot be a whole of individual individuals because an individual in the whole is [itself]" (Gabriel, 2010, p. 97). Kierkegaard believed that subjectivity and individuality are necessary because they are inherently ethical. In other word, the genuine ethical individual is the subjective individual with an ethical responsibility toward the self and others: "To have individuality is to believe in the individuality of every other person" (Kierkegaard, 1998b, p. 253). Kierkegaard expresses individuality as the subjective single ethical individual that we are and ought to be. This reengagement of the inevitability of individuality rings familiar of postmodernity's mistrust of abstract power or any communicative condition or praxis that is inimical to difference.

Jacques Ellul and Thomas Merton draw upon Kierkegaard's critique of abstract power to contest the enforcement of mass public references and social imperialism in contemporary society. Ellul (1964) expressed his contestation by way of the metaphor of "*technique*," which he defined as a "standardized means of attaining a predeterminate result" (p. 1). Ellul considered *technique* as a communicative paralysis that continues to plague contemporary society. Driven by "the totality of method" and "absolute efficiency," (Ellul, 1964), *technique* absorbs every

aspect of human discourse “into the monstrous technical mechanism” of abstraction (p. 319). The end result is the abrogation of the foundation and the ethical capabilities of the subjective individual. “For what is under attack in our present political society is the autonomous citizen, his ability to judge for himself. He is set up against ... propaganda in diverse forms” (Ellul, 1968, p. 749; cited in Shaws, 2014, p. 103). *Technique* is the demise of the ethical individual subject, yet—through propaganda—its damaging effects are camouflaged persuading the individual into believing that submitting the self to the mass is in its best interest (Shaw, 2014, p. 104).

Merton agrees with Ellul about the negative and devastating effects of *technique* on the human condition. *Technique*, for Merton (1961), forges the “mass man ... a dull collective routine of popular fantasies maintained in existence by the collective dream” (p. 268). The “mass man” celebrates grand narratives and derives its inspiration from social progress. This so-called inspiration moves individual responsibility to the “laws of collective existence” (Merton, 1966, p. 14). Inspired by mass movement, the self loses its individuality, consciousness, and bias ground. Merton saw the danger of the tyranny of *technique* as an existential lie:

Now if we take our vulnerable shell to be our true identity, if we think our mask is our true face, we will protect it with fabrications even at the cost of violating our own truth. This seems to be the collective endeavor of society: the more busily [people] dedicate themselves to it, the more certainly it becomes a collective illusion, until in the end we have the enormous, obsessive, uncontrollable dynamic of fabrications designed to protect mere fictitious identities—“selves,” that is to say, regarded as objects ... an illusion. (p. 15)

Collective illusion, keen on reifying the mass man, becomes “an illusion of omnipotence” that not only fails to acknowledge individuality (difference), but makes the individual to be inordinately dependent on collective power.

Ellul and Merton were critical of mass totality. They believe that modernity’s prejudice against individual subjectivity is Kierkegaard’s prophecy fulfilled. Like Kierkegaard, Ellul and Merton question abstract power and its companion, social progress. Ellul and Merton see social progress as a form of “monopole despotism” (Geertz, 1995) that negates individuality with the illusion of an “enlarged mentality.” Monopole despotism, unlike an enlarged mentality, which is attentive individuality, is predicated upon conformity.

Ellul and Merton engaged Kierkegaard’s charge against conformity and its “bad faith” effect on human discourse, relationships, and ethical responsibility. Their work offer insight into the dangers of mass totality, the product of *technique*. Mass totality can be perceived as the primordial sanctuary of individual safety, which includes freedom and happiness, yet a threat to that very safety it promises to offer. Ellul and Merton, in the tradition of Kierkegaard, recognized that the fascination with mechanism and the unreflective embracement of social progress spurred collective power based upon conformity.

Ellul and Merton, like their predecessor Kierkegaard, were leery of abstract power’s corollary companion to sanction conformity. Abstract power levels subjective individuality. Thus, when Kierkegaard critiqued the communicative dark side of modernity, he was aware of the dominant social currents of the time—the power and constraint of the mass man. “The mass man signifies a step backward in the development of the individual” (Malantschuk, 1980, p. 14). José Ortega y Gasset (1932) decries the “leveling” constraints of the modern mass man. The mass man “crushes beneath it everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual,

qualified and select” (p. 18; cited in Puchniak, 2011, p. 148). The mass man valorizes homogeneity, controlling heterogeneity.

Kierkegaard understood the nature of the modern mass man and its totalitarian tendencies—leveling individuals into a public, faceless mass: “The trend today is in the direction of mathematical equality, so that in all classes about so and so many uniformly make one individual” (Kierkegaard, 1978, p. 85). The mass man abstracts individuality into homogeneity. The abstraction, a colonizing trait of mass movement forms constraints that endorses conformity (consensus) and excludes deformity (dissensus) as a spoiled identity. The mass public underscores Kierkegaard’s concept of leveling, the monologic “massification” (Tuttle, 1996) of selves.

Leveling, the Individual as “Mass Public”

The totalizing nature of Hegelianism displayed itself in modernity’s hostility toward subjective individuality. For Kierkegaard, modernity lived within the metaphor of the mass public, tyrannical to “irreducible subjectivity” (Rubenstein, 2001). Kierkegaard criticizes the tyranny of the mass public and its gratuitous emphasis on totality—a totalitarian phantom aggregate that annexes subjective individuality. The single individual is massed “so that in all classes about so-and-so many uniformly make one individual” (Kierkegaard, 1978, p. 85). It is this totalitarian annexation of the singular individual into a mass society that Kierkegaard calls leveling.

Kierkegaard defines leveling as “the public,” an abstract homogeneity that strips the individual of its singularity and subjectivity as well its ground of conviction. Through leveling, authenticity is effaced, offering the individual a false sense of security in the autocratic public.

Kierkegaard (1978) considers the public a “monstrous nonentity” (p. 91) and a “cruel abstraction” (p. 93) hostile to the subjective, existing individual. “Anyone can see that leveling has its profound importance in the ascendancy of the category of ‘generation’ over the category of ‘individuality’” (p. 84). Kierkegaard is critical of the totalizing structures of modernity and its unfettered belief in abstract power.

In leveling, the individual forgoes its ground of conviction, giving in to ideological control through an “abstract aggregate” (p. 94). In accepting this “dubious vision of communal life” (Smith, 2003) “ridiculously formed by the participant’s becoming a third party” (Kierkegaard, 1978, p. 94), the individual is stripped of its authenticity, loses its primordial ethical meaning as a subjective, existing individual. Recognizing the dangers of what he called “spiritlessness,” Kierkegaard accuses modernity of “the idolized principle of” (p. 86) of social totality which “from an ethical point of view” (p. 106) undermines individual subjectivity. The individual, in this case, suffers what Michael Hyde (2005) calls “social death.” Social death occurs when the individual (or the self) loses its basis ground under totalitarian conditions or when the difference of the other is intentionally ignored. From Kierkegaard’s perspectives, social death signifies “the abrogation of the passionate disjunction between subjectivity and objectivity” and the loss of “full-blooded individuality” (1978, p. 103). The result, of which, is an existential disconnectedness. Thus, the individual “forgets himself, forgets his name ... it does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too venturesome a thing to be himself” (Kierkegaard, 1980, pp. 166-167), seeking refuge in the mass public.

In mass totality, “the quantitative dialectic of numerical accumulation replaces the qualitative dialectic of individual resolution,” mitigating individual ethical responsibility (Taylor, 2000, p. 58). In leveling, the individual chooses consensus over dissensus, locating ethical

responsibility in the mass narrative. Leveling masks the hidden paternalism of mass totality, making the individual opt to relinquish the self to social progress with the belief that freedom is guaranteed in a collective dream. Yet mass totality offers nothing, but an abstract aggregate of false selves, stymieing oughtness-capabilities.

Kierkegaard maintains that modernity defined human existence and being in monological terms, destabilizing individuality and leveling the individual to a “neutral and criterion-less station of” mass totality (Tuttle, 1996, p. 35). Modernity is fundamentally structured on an abstract aggregate—an aggregate that promotes systematic leveling of subjective individuality. In such a state, Kierkegaard (1978) writes,

In our age the principle of association ... is not affirmative but negative; it is an evasion, a dissipation, an illusion, whose dialectic is as follows: as it strengthens individuals it vitiates them; it strengthens by numbers, by sticking together, but from an ethical point of view this is a weakening. Not until the single individual has established an ethical stance despite the whole world, not until then can there be any question of genuinely uniting; otherwise it gets to be a union of people who separately are weak, a union as unbeautiful and depraved as a child marriage.

(p. 106)

Leveling, through the mass public, obliterates difference, denies existence, and stagnates becoming (Rubenstein, 2001, p. 451). Leveling positions the individual within the comfort of “indolence” and passivity, relegating status and value to the mass public. Kierkegaard saw the mass public as a social totality in which leveling—through chatter, everyday talk, and the press—commodifies discourse (see Bové, 1992; Herrmann, 2008). For example, the press—Kierkegaard argues—has become “the self-appointed arbiter of taste and the purveyor of socially

accepted attitudes ... genuine communication is undermined as words devolve into mere chatter ... The abstract voice of the faceless editors, posing as the representatives of the people, becomes an instrument of manipulation” (Barrett, 2010, p. 26). Kierkegaard was privy to the negative consequences of the press.

In 1845, an underground yet popular Danish weekly, *The Corsair* published a critical review of Kierkegaard’s *Stages on Life’s Way*. Suspecting the review was a handiwork of two of his nemeses—Peder Ludvig Moller and Adam Goldschmidt, Kierkegaard launched a rebuttal titled “‘*The Activity of a Traveling Aesthetician and How He Nonetheless Came to Pay for Dinner*’” (Garff, 2013, p. 393). The derisive rebuttal closed with the remark, “Where the Spirit is, there is the Church: Where P. L. Moller is, there is *The Corsair*” (p. 394). *The Corsair* fired back with articles that portrayed Kierkegaard “as a round-shouldered yet rather upright figure, situated on a cloud and surrounded by a heavenly nimbus; he is located at the center of the universe and around him orbit the Round Tower, the Church of our Lady, boots, bottles, pipes, books, the sun, moon, stars and many other things” (p. 401). The scuffle made Kierkegaard a target of street mockery, depriving him of his routine street strolls, “daily baths” (p. 308). Unwilling to be defined by the totalizing caricatures of the press, Kierkegaard (1967-1978) comments:

So goes it. I posed the problem which confronts the whole generation: equality between man and man. I posed it in action here in Copenhagen. That is something quite different from writing a few words about it; I expressed some approximation of it with my life. . . . But people do not grasp this, but they do talk and I become the victim; and I am supposed to have been guilty of pride, I who have fought sacrificially for equality. (p. 114)

For Kierkegaard his counterattack was defense against the totalizing effects of the press, a monologic phenomenon of mass totality. In his response to the totalizing effects of leveling, Kierkegaard charges that mass totality and its handiwork—the press—has worked itself out as communicatively regressive, leaving no room for subjectivity, difference or otherness. In so doing, the irreducible subjective individual is amassed and collapsed into totality. The irreducible subjective individual, conceived in this zombie form, beckons and constrains what “it means to be an individual in a society” come of age (see Herrmann, 2008, p. 74).

Kierkegaard embodied a dialogic of existential, temporal subjective conditions of truth claims, calling forth the pluralism, the contextuality, and the performativity that privilege truth as irreducibly subjective (see Wood & Medina, 2005, p. 43). This irreducible subjectivity or subjective individuality is key to Kierkegaard’s notion of existential individual. “Not until the single individual has established an ethical stance despite the whole world, not until then can there be any question of genuinely uniting” (Kierkegaard, 1978, p. 106). Kierkegaard’s notion of the existential individual foreshadows the postmodern thought that dialogue reflects a ground of conviction that is constituted as difference which expresses individual responsibility and authenticity. “The individual is the category through which ... this age, all history, the human race as a whole, must pass” (Kierkegaard, 1998a, p. 118). The individual is not an abstract monological object of a Hegelian ethics of totality (see Ziarek, 2001) that culminates in the numbing of the subjective ethical individual.

The subjective ethical individual is an ethical conscious self that “requires acceptance of the quite different idea that one is a responsible agent” (Hannay, 2001, p. 178). The subjective ethical individual for Kierkegaard is, therefore, a conscious, volitional being capable of cutting “short passivity and imaginative manipulation,” asking what it is to be a subjective, existing

individual, staking “out one’s own future according to a view of life, and revealing oneself “in a context of familial and social responsibilities” (p. 178). Leveling, on the other hand, is a systemic fraud that would have one believe that individuality is something to be countered because it stands in the way of the normative life. For Kierkegaard (1992), the aim of leveling is “to turn the subjective individual into something accidental and thereby turn” difference “into an indifferent, vanishing something” (p. 193). This is why Kierkegaard valorizes inwardness as a way to counter unreflective allegiance to mass totality.

Inwardness mirrors truth as irreducibly subjective, a subjectivity that expresses idioms that would otherwise be leveled by an ethics of totality. Inwardness and the authentic self-becoming it implies is not only a means for countering leveling but also an end to be engaged communicatively in the struggle to reclaim petite narratives under the tyranny of the social. Reminiscent of Badiouian *universal singularity* (see Badiou, 2003), inwardness offers a way to think about subjective individuality as visceral struggle to express difference. In other words, inwardness bears witness to difference by finding petite narratives to express it. For Kierkegaard, inwardness is a dialogic necessity. In facing this necessity, the ethical individual expresses truth as subjectivity (see Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 213).

In other to work out this subjectivity, Kierkegaard draws upon the notion of irony to scrutinize the pretensions and social truths of the time as well as offer a model for self-examination (Perkins, 2001, p. 2). Irony mirrors its inevitable references in times of difference, fostering individuality as a dialogic necessity.

Irony and Subjective Individuality

For Kierkegaard, irony is a form of dialogic positioning that interrogates the tyrannical proclivities of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* which blurs the distinctions between individuality and totality. This blurring of distinctions works to undermine subjective individuality, a Kierkegaardian cultivation of difference in human communication. Kierkegaard (1989) deploys irony as an existential necessity: “Just as philosophy begins with doubt, so also life that may be called human begins with irony” (p. 6). Irony functions as a preservative “to keep the space of subjectivity open” (Perkins, 2001, p. 275), to protect universal singularity from universal generality, and to free the individual from the monological impositions of mass totality, a social opiate.

From a communicative standpoint, irony creates idioms to express individuality through a reflective distancing of the self “from any believable universal *telos*” (Soderquist, 2007, p. 25). With its theorization in the existential wellbeing of the ethical single individual, irony interrogates the colonization of the spaces of subjectivity. These spaces constitute individual “negative freedom” (Kierkegaard, 1989, p. 247), shielding the individual from the totalitarian grasps of the *Sittlichkeit* Leviathan. Thus irony is the “way” to individual subjectivity (p. 327). It suggests the inevitability of a biased ground of conviction. Kierkegaard alludes to this necessity by pointing to how, through irony, the ethical single individual stands his/her ground of conviction rather getting amassed by social conventions. “[Irony] requires an individual to be his or her own authoritative interpreter and thus his or her own creator. The aim is to establish his or her own way of acting in the world independently of divine input” (Soderquist, 2007, p. 27). This sense of ground was a crucial aspect of Kierkegaard’s dissertation, *On the Concept of Irony*.

Due to Hegel's critique of (Romantic) irony as "infinite absolute negativity," Kierkegaard found it necessary to revisit Hegel's concerns that irony was dialectically problematic because it was self-negating. Kierkegaard (1989) states:

Thus we have irony as infinite absolute negativity. It is negativity because it only negates; it is finite because it negates not this or that phenomenon; and it is absolute because it negates by virtue of a higher which is not. Irony establishes nothing, for that which is to be established lies behind it. (p. 254)

Kierkegaard nuanced his treatment of irony, calling instead for a controlled form of irony. For the Kierkegaard, when left uncontrolled, irony stymies subjective individuality, an authentic human life. Controlled irony, on the other hand, "makes a movement opposite to that which is uncontrolled declares it life. Irony finitizes and circumscribes and thereby yields truth, actuality, content; it disciplines and punishes and thereby yields balance and consistency" (p. 326). Unlike Hegel who connects "infinite absolute negativity" to truth as self-actualization rather than an attentive response to situated knowledge, Kierkegaard situates irony in subjective individuality.

In a way quite consistent with the insights of Arendt (1994), one could argue that Kierkegaard, speaking the idiom of the human condition under totalitarianism, wants to put forward the following:

Against Hegel's system, which presumed to comprehend and explain the "whole," Kierkegaard for sets the "individual," the single human being, for whom there is neither place nor meaning in a totality controlled by the world spirit. In other words, Kierkegaard's point of departure is the individual's sense of being lost in a world otherwise totally explained. This individual stands in constant contradiction to this explained world because his "existence," that is, the very fact of his

altogether arbitrary existing ... can neither be foreseen by reason nor resolved by it into something purely thinkable. (p. 173)

For Kierkegaard, irony preserves subjective individuality under autocratic conditions and to strengthen the single ethical individual in contexts that perpetuate the tyranny of what Arendt referred to as the “social” (Arendt, 1998, p. 38; cited in Arnett, Fritz, and Holba, 2007, p. 122).

The social must be ironized for individuality to thrive. Thus, holed up in the incessant totalitarian workings of the Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*, Kierkegaard’s irony becomes a *phronetic* (practical wisdom) response to a totally socialized world. Irony within Kierkegaard’s philosophical project rejects abstract homogenizing ethics which ignores the single ethical individual. Irony resonates with the tenets of the ethics of singularity which acknowledges individuality. Such an understanding of irony conceptualizes the self as an ethical single individual. The ethical points to response and responsibility. Lipari (2009b) used the notion of response as the “voice of ethics” which receives “the otherness of the other” (p. 47). For Kierkegaard, irony is the voice of ethics that acknowledges the narratives of others, contrary to the communicative shadow side of the totalizing whole, the side that welcomes autocratic impulses to erase difference. In sum, irony allows the ethical individual to engage Bonhoeffer’s notion of “deputyship”—service to others.

We discover this kind of communicative responsibility in Kierkegaard’s subtle, yet forceful advocacy of “indirect communication,” a dialogic ethos that responds to the needs and interests of others according to enthymematically understood and presupposed prior responsibility. The indirect communicator engages dialogue as enthymematic interactions with other selves. Such enthymematic interactions—and the co-creating of meanings in solidarity with difference—favor both the existential and phenomenological conditions of the individual or

subjective spaces and embodied narratives of a culture or tradition. Kierkegaard (1998b) best illustrates this with the metaphor: “to stand by oneself—through another’s help!” (Kierkegaard, 1998b, p. 275). For Kierkegaard, subjective individuality qua subjective individuality is an ethics of responsibility toward others. However, this responsibility can only be engaged indirectly.

Jonathan Malesic (2009) offered an insightful analogy of Kierkegaard’s notion of indirect communication and its impact on the subjective individual.

... if, for instance, I publicly resolve to help an alcoholic overcome his addiction, I have released that person from slavery to alcohol, but I have become the person’s master in its place. I have not performed the greatest beneficence, because—even if I am a less destructive master than liquor had been—the recovering alcoholic is still not his own master. (p. 110)

On the other hand, the responsible, single ethical individual engages ironic indirect communication to shift the terrain of a telling centered communication to a listening centered communication. This way, the ethical individual creates a space for individuality and inspires provincial articulations of subjectivity embodied in the other (subject) standing by itself—with the help of another. Edward Mooney (2010) called this shifting of terrain “interpersonal inwardness.” It involves “making oneself unnoticed” (Kierkegaard, 1998b, p. 274) while spurring self-activity and critical engagement in the individual.

Individual critical self-engagement from a Kierkegaardian perspective highlights the communication of ethical capability otherwise than the communication of knowledge (Kierkegaard, 1967-1978, p. 307). Ethics, for Kierkegaard, is not an object of knowledge—It “cannot be taught” directly (p. 463); ethics is an indirect communicative evocation of capability (Tietjen, 2013)—It “is more or less indirect communication” (Kierkegaard, 1967-1978, p. 308).

According to Kierkegaard, the most important proponent of indirect communication was Socrates, who embraced the maieutic discourse of “synergistic as opposed to agonistic pedagogy” (Halasek, 1999, p. 182) to assist individuals realized and express their ethical potentials. Kierkegaard (1989) engaged the Socratic exemplar of indirect communication—the art of conversation (p. 70)—to bring about self-awareness.

Dialogic Relevance

Kierkegaard’s emphasis on the single ethical individual offers insight into the relevancy of the biased ground in dialogic communication ethics. Kierkegaard’s philosophical project connects the dangers of monologic communication to “unreflective consensus” (Arnett, 2007a). As a precursor to postmodernism’s quest for difference, Kierkegaard offers a hermeneutic and an existential mode of inquiry into the dialogic necessity of irony as a constituent element of individuality. For Kierkegaard, irony is otherwise than originaive totality because it privileges subjective ethical individuality “by highlighting the contradiction between finite social conventions and the infinite requirement of the self to develop into the ethical single individual, who is greater than social conformity” (Williams III, 2012, p. 310). Irony, therefore, encapsulates individuality.

With Kierkegaard, comes the understanding that irony problematizes yet makes possible the relevancy of individuality in every communicative praxis. By questioning originaive totality and privileging the ethical single individual, Kierkegaard instantiates difference as a communicative ground of conviction possible only through irony, which “accentuates one’s own *I* in relation to the ethical requirement—and culture” (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 503; cited in Westphal, 1996, p. 166). Climacus points to this *I*—a subjective individuality—as a rhetorical

necessity for purging modernity's overindulgence in what Kierkegaard would have called *Sittlichkeit*-in-becoming (see Kierkegaard, 1989, p. 77; Westphal, 1996, p. 111). Contrary to *Sittlichkeit*-in-becoming is the condition of becoming subjective which is "constituted in relationality and multiplicity" (Russell, 2009, p. 6). Through relationality and multiplicity emerge the subjective individual with a "commitment to the demands of the ethical" (Lippitt, 2000, pp. 92-93). From the standpoint of dialogic communication, the ethical commitment is a responsibility toward others: "In Kierkegaard we encounter" the ethical single individual "defined in terms of responsibility" (Gron, 2008, p. 29). The subjective individual is not the self-absorbed individual, but an ethical single individual who "helps others toward responsible individuality" (Williams III, 2012, p. 312). The ethical responsibility toward others forecloses the therapeutic *I* while endorsing a rhetorical turn to a derivative *I*. Ethical responsibility, so construed, is akin to the Kierkegaardian love mantra "to stand alone—by another's help!" (Kierkegaard, 1998b, p. 274) and leads to the dialogic revisioning of relationality and multiplicity in the light of an ethics of responsibility.

In the revisioning of relationality and multiplicity in the light of an ethics responsibility, this project calls for recognizing difference as a dialogic necessity, embodied in the biased ground of individuality. As a dialogic necessity, difference provides the platform for acknowledging the biased ground of the other. Such an understanding instantiates rhetorical prejudice—the subject matter of this dissertation—as dialogic irony, that is, the biased ground as protected spaces where individuality thrives or flourishes, and where "continual inner appropriation of the demands of the ethical can take place" (Lippitt, 2000, p. 92). The ethical mentioned here derives from the dialogic import of Kierkegaard's irony, which unlike the Hegelian ethics that obliterates individuality, is attentive to difference. The attentiveness to

difference is a dialogic ironic act with emancipatory and counterhegemonic potentials constituted through civility, respect, and responsibility (Arnett & Arneson, 1999), the meeting of minds (Peters, 1999), acknowledgement (Hyde, 2005) realized within the dialectical conception of dialogue (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Dialogic irony, therefore, can be reconceptualized within the framework of a “dialogical positioning” (Smith, 2008) that is attentive to difference. Although Hegel’s irony is actualized through the principle of subjectivity, he situates ethics within the totalitarian structures of the *Sittlichkeit*-in-becoming. Kierkegaard’s irony, on the other hand, is an ethics that valorizes and protects subjective individuality from the totalitarian clutches of Hegelian ethics. What Kierkegaard’s philosophical project brings to dialogic ethics is the ethical single individual who is attentive to difference. I believe that Kierkegaard’s conception of the ethical single individual would resonate with Luce Irigaray’s notion of ethical intersubjectivity, which she described as the acknowledgement of the ethics of difference. In *To Be Two* (2001), Irigaray writes,

Does existing not mean offering you an opportunity to become yourself? ...

Consuming does not produce one’s existence. Instead, difference can protect this existence: I am if you are, to be together with you allows me to become. The two, this two, is the bit more which is indispensable, if I am to be. Closing myself up in consumption, in possession, in production, does not make me one. What makes me one, and perhaps even unique, is the fact that you are and I am not you. (p. 15 and p. 16)

As a result, Kierkegaard believes that ethical single individuality recognizes and encounters difference as an ontological irreducibility embodied in dialogic irony. For Kierkegaard, irony works to nurture subjective individuality. The communicative consequence of such an ethical

subjective individuality is a dialogical positioning which unfinalizes individuals in a continuous ethical discourse. Continuous because discourse cannot be finalized; discourse is a continuous communicative praxis demonstrated in a subjective commitment to difference in counterpoise to the notion of abstract aggregation:

In community, the single individual is; the single individual is dialectically decisive as the presupposition for forming community, and in community the single individual is qualitatively something essential and can at any moment become higher than “community,” specifically, as soon as “the others” fall away from the idea. The cohesiveness of community comes from each one’s being a single individual, and then the idea; the connectedness of a public or rather its disconnectedness consists of the numerical character of everything. (Kierkegaard, 1967-1978, p. 318)

Numerical totalitarianism and numerical capitalism are birds of the same feather. Mass totality is a commodity for negating difference—differing narrative grounds—with a pretense of *sensus communis*. Kierkegaard understood the dangers of mass totality. Kierkegaard demythologizes the Hegelian Leviathan—mass totality—pointing to the dialogic necessity of irony. It is irony that gives birth to the ethical single individual. Kierkegaard offers a dialogic suggestion: the ethical life is not *sensus communis*; rather, it is a personal and subjective engagement of *sensus communis*. From a dialogic communication perspective, Kierkegaard’s work offers insight into the postmodern assumption that the ethical life is not *sensus communis*; rather, it is a personal and subjective engagement of *sensus communis*.

CHAPTER SIX— The Derivative “I” for the Other: Dialogic Ethical Responsibility

Throughout its history, communication ethics has bristled with questions of response and responsibility. The case for responsibility has been constructed through recent works by Ronald Arnett (2003, 2004, 2008a), Michael Hyde (2001), Pat Gehrke (2010), Spoma Jovanovic and Roy Wood (2004), Lisbeth Lipari (2004, 2009b, 2012), and Jeffery Murray (2000). The explicit perspectives of these scholarships rest on Levinas’s task of tracing “out the obligation that is always prior to any knowledge” (Levinas, 1985, p. 90; cited in Gehrke, 2010, p.5). Arnett (2004) points to this Levinasian emphasis on obligation, calling it a “responsive ethical ‘I,’” which for Lipari (2009b) is a “listening otherwise that suspends the willfulness of the self and fore-knowledge in other to receive the singularities of the alterities of the other” (p. 44). Thus, the “I” is tied to an ethics of responsibility.

This chapter works with Levinas’s ethics of responsibility in conjunction with the dialogic metaphor “I for the other” as an ethics that emerge from engaging and acknowledging the biased ground of the radically different other. In contributing to the necessity of rhetorical prejudice in communication ethics, this project first takes up phenomenological notion of ethics as “first philosophy” as Levinas conceives it. I then explore the relationship between the ethical “I” and radical alterity. In other words, does the “I” have an ethical responsibility to respond to the biased ground of the radically different other? The issue of response is a listening otherwise that situates the “‘I’ as derivative of the Other” (see Arnett, 2004, p. 80). The chapter concludes by looking at the Levinas’s derivative “I” in the context of the inevitability of the ground of the Other.

This chapter contributes to the ongoing scholarship on the necessity of prejudice as the ground on which we stand, outlining Levinas’s ethics of responsibility and its connection to the

radically different biased ground of the Other. With Levinas, this project argues that (rhetorical) prejudice or bias—one's ground of conviction—is not some “‘hermetic closure’ of Leibnizian origin” (Wehling-Giorgi, 2007, p. 63), but a rhetorical opening charged with an ethical relation, the responsibility to respond to the otherness of the Other. This charge, a “voice of ethics” (Lipari, 2009b) that calls forth attentive listening to difference is a phenomenological *prima facie* principle of ethics.

Ethics as First Philosophy

Levinas, David Levin (1993) argues, was critical of modernity's tyranny of “ocularcentric philosophy,” which propelled an absolutist ethics that violently reduced “the human other to transcendental sameness” (p. 18). This critique of the hegemony of ocularcentrism, Paul Davies (1993) contends, is evident in Levinas's “ethical alterations of sensibility,” a phenomenological “thought of the singular and irreducible alterity of the ... Other as face—expressed in those places, then, where it is impossible to separate or to abstract the ... alterity from the specific encounter with the other person, the other human being” (p. 252). Irreducible alterity articulates an ethical responsibility, a “givenness, of the Other as other” (Crowell, 2010, p. 7). This givenness, a derivative command, involves an ethical responsibility for the singularity of the alterity of the other (Lipari, 2009b). That givenness, for Levinas, makes ethics prior to ontology.

By prioritizing ethics, Levinas questions the ontological assumptions of Being (Arnett, 2004). Levinas (1969) writes,

ontology is as first philosophy which does not question the Same ... subordinates the relationship with the Other to the relation with Being in general, remains

under obedience to the anonymous, and leads inevitably to another power, to imperialist domination, to tyranny ... Being before the *existent*, is ... a movement within the Same, without regard for any obligation to the Other. (pp. 46-47)

Ethics is prior to Being. Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007b) allude to the primacy of ethics, questioning the advancing of human agency at the expense of otherness (pp. 117-118). Their call to return to otherness resonates with an earlier call from Levinas which involves “interpreting otherwise than being,” a phenomenological-communicative turn away from humanistic agency to an ethics of responsibility toward the Other:

Interpreting otherwise suggests interpreting otherwise than Being. Levinas offers a counter to Being and willfulness—he interprets otherwise than Being...suggests a pragmatic and natural concern for the Other—without the Other there is no “I.” Levinas posits ethics not being, as first philosophy. Ethics is primordial, a priori to being. (Arnett, 2004, p. 80)

Levinas’s otherwise than being is an “alternative phenomenology” (Peperzak, Critchley, & Bernasconi, 1996, p. 150) that privileges an ethics of responsibility to and for the Other despite the overwhelming demands of “originative agency” (Arnett, 2008a). Levinas’ ethics of responsibility privileges derivative agency by offering “a responsive ‘I’” that is attentive to the voice of the Other (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 56). The responsive I commands a “listening otherwise” (Lipari, 2009b) and is driven by the “ethical echo,” “I am my brother’s keeper” (see R. Arnett, 2012a, p. 140). Such a listening otherwise is the glare of responsibility in the face of the Other (Levinas, 1969, p. 24). Arnett (2012a) calls the listening otherwise an “impersonal attentiveness.” For Lipari (2004, 2009b), it is a “listening for the Other” or a “listening

otherwise,” a “voice of ethics” that is welcoming of difference. I call the listening act *ethical givenness*.

It is in the ethical givenness that the “I” becomes a responsive I that is attentive to the ontic difference of the Other. Levinas makes a distinction between “Other” and “other.” The former, *autrui*—“the personal other, the you”—represents radical alterity; the latter, *autre*—represents the other as another (Levinas, 1991, pp. 24-25; cited in Gehrke, 2010, p. 8). For Levinas, the Other is a radical, singular otherness that transcends totality (Ponzio, 2008). This is what is meant in Kierkegaard’s existential ethics as the ethical individual whose singularity defies universality (see Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 61) and perhaps what Bonhoeffer (1955) means by “deputyship” (see Arnett, 2005, p. 9). Bonhoeffer writes, “Deputyship, and therefore responsibility, lies only in the complete surrender of one’s own life to the other ... only the selfless ... lives responsibly, and this means only the selfless ... *lives*” (p. 222). Deputyship is an ethical givenness “come of age,” and is founded on an ethics of responsibility that places the *I* in a derivative consciousness (Arnett, 2005). In the words of Michael Morgan (2007), it is “my responsibility as responsivity” (p. 160).

As Gehrke (2010) said, “It is not merely anti-humanism that drives Levinas’s philosophy” (p. 7). Levinas shifts ethics from the realm of Hegelian phenomenology and its obsession with the totalitarian *Sittlichkeit* to a postmodern revisioning of ethics from the standpoint of Plato’s “Good beyond Being” (Levinas, 1969, p. 293). Levinas engages Plato’s notion of the good beyond being to interrogate the systemic “ontologies of the Western tradition” (Hamblet, 2009, p. 15), calling forth an “answerability to the other” (Levinas & Kearney, 1986, p. 27; cited in Shepherd, 2014, p. 115). What Levinas means by answerability is a responsibility, which is an “involvement, exposition, proximity of one-for-the-other” (Ponzio, 2008, p. 121).

Contrary to the Hegelian preoccupation with ontology, and its proclivity to reduce heterogeneity to homogeneity, Levinas ethics preserves particularity and singularity. For Levinas, the Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* privileges “ontology as first philosophy,” and is tantamount to “a philosophy of power” (Levinas, 1969, p. 46). The Hegelian *I* is an embodiment of negation and is “integrally violent” (Kosky, 2001, p. 5). The Hegelian phenomenology creates an autonomous *I* with the proclivity to co-opt and colonize alterity.

The Hegelian *I*, ethically conceived, is therapeutic. It is a master *I*, a self-absorbed, desiring *I* concerned existentially with its own recognition. Such an *I* transports the self into provincial individualism, making dialogue impossible. Hegel alludes to the danger of provincial individualism as “postures of coercion and domination” that “contradict and undermine” reciprocity (Williams, 1997, p. 85). The Hegelian *I* is a parochial monologic economy which privileges relations with the other as ontological, and ontology as prior to ethics. Hegel’s confidence in ontology typified in the autonomous desiring *I*, valorizes the enlightenment thinking that responsibility to the self is prior to responsibility to the Other (Knights & O’Leary, 2006). At the heart of such thinking is a phenomenological problem, a routinized negation that makes the experience of difference a communicative pariah.

The autonomous desiring *I* makes the self an absolute *I*. The absolute *I* reduces the particularity of the other to the commonality of totality. The absolute *I* presuppose an understanding of autonomy as negative dialectics evident in the Hegelian master-slave dialectics (Houlgate, 2013, p. 97). The dialectics constitute a phenomenological point of desire—the desire to subjugate the other.

Levinas, on the other hand, reverts the Hegelian absolute *I* and its penchant to wrestle the ground of the other. The *I* for Levinas is an a priori givenness, an ethically engaged

phenomenology inextricably linked to responsibility. As Levinas advocated in his *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other* (1998a), the ethical responsibility of the *I* is an “interhuman order,” an ethical implicature that is propelled by “altruism,” not “egoism” (p. 86). As Levinas said, The *I* is an “ethical event” that interrogates “indifference” (p. viii):

When the human existence interrupts and goes beyond the Spinozan *conatus essendi*—there is a vocation of an existing-for-the-other stronger than the threat of death: the fellow human being’s existential adventure matters to the *I* more than its own, posing from the start the *I* as responsible for the being of the other; responsible, that is, unique and elect, as an *I* who is no longer just any individual member of the human race. It is as if the emergence of the human in the economy of being upset the meaning of and plot of and philosophical rank of ontology: the in-itself of being-persisting-in-being goes beyond itself in the gratuitousness of the outside-of-itself-for-the-other...(p. viii)

The *I* is constituted as a responsive ethical *I* in the tradition of Isaiah’s prophetic response, “Here I am” (6:8)—which Levinas, in fact implicitly alludes to in *Otherwise than Being* (1991, p. 114). In other words, the *I* for Levinas is constituted not as a Spinozan therapeutic *I*, a dominant western ontology of the self, which Tocqueville would call individualism, but a derivative *I* that is attentive to the individuality of the “wholly Other” (John D Caputo, 1993, p. 210). This work connects attentiveness to Otherness as an intersubjective dialogical positioning (Smith, 1997; Smith, 2008), which resonates with Francois Lyotard’s (1988) *The Differend*. For Lyotard, *The Differend* “is a sense of obligation toward others in concrete spatio-temporal fields marked on their grounds of” rhetorical prejudice, and “constitute[s] a “quasi-ethical imperative that Lyotard develops out of his reading of Levinas” (Smith, 2008, p. 167). Like Levinas and Lyotard, this

work argues that the dialogic is an ethical givenness, a derivative implicature, an attentive response to the radical difference or the singularity of the other. This embodied givenness is the origin of human responsibility, and the grounds of Levinas' ethics of responsibility as first philosophy.

Zygmunt Bauman (1993) identifies with Levinas's ethics of responsibility, calling it "answerability to the Other and to moral conscience" (p. 11). Like Levinas, Bauman argues that ethics is an infinite responsibility to the Other—i.e., "meeting with the Other as a 'face'" (Crone, 2008, p. 64). This ethical implicature, with emphasis on "moral responsibility," teases out of the self a commitment "to the interhuman order and interrupts complacent and self-satisfied existence" (Hughes, 2005, p. 157). Moral responsibility is understood here as a derivatively engaged conscience. It is marked by a response *I*; It is an *I* that is supportive and responsive to the Other. The responsiveness cannot be ignored or jettisoned. As Levinas (1985) said, "It is in this precise sense that Dostoyevsky said: 'We are responsible for all men before all, and I am more than all others'" (p. 101). When the *I* is responsive to the Other, it becomes neither a Hegelian master nor slave, but a "signification" (Ponzio, 2008) of givenness. The ethical givenness implied here entails "the condition of being a hostage" (Ponzio, 2008, p. 122). The hostage "represents itself ('here I am') in its responsibility for others" (Derrida, 1999, p. 55).

Levinas says:

Responsibility for the Other is not an accident that happens to a subject, but precedes essence in it, has not awaited freedom, in which a commitment to the Other would have been made. I have not done anything and I have always been under accusation—persecuted. The ipseity, in the passivity without arche

characteristic of identity, is hostage. The word *I* means *here I am*, answering for everything and for everyone. (Levinas, 1991, p. 114; cited in Derrida, 1995, p. 55) Lipari (2009b) clarifies the linkage between the metaphor of hostage and responsibility when she said, “The self is called to responsibility for the other before it is free” (2009b, p. 55). Anne Fadiman’s title, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* suggests the responsibility to listen to the alterity of the radically different other. Making the connection between the self being held hostage by the “other’s call” would make statement “the spirit catches you, and you fall down” attractive to Levinas.

By ethics as first philosophy, Levinas meant being caught by the “voice of ethics,” and most importantly, subordinating the self to “a listening that is awakened and attuned” to the alterity of the Other. Levinas’s work points to an *I* whose “everydayness” is conditioned by an ethical givenness to the singularity of the Other.

Ethical Givenness and the Singularity of the Other

David Miller, in ‘*Are They My Poor?*’ (2004), revisits the ethical necessity of responsibility to others. Miller called this responsibility altruism—a “behavior that is intended to meet the needs of others, where there is no immediate self-interested reason to help, and where there is no institutional requirement that one should” (p. 109). What Miller refers to as altruism has kinship with the notion of ethical givenness in the tradition of Levinas’s “ethics of infinite otherness” (Gehrke, 2010, p. 9), “the voice of ethics” (Lipari, 2009b) attentive to the inviolable and irreducible difference of the Other. This “recognition of difference” (see Arnett, 2004, pp. 84-85), frames the relationship between the *I* and the Other as an “other awareness” (Lipari, 2009a, p. 354) This other awareness is grounded in service otherwise than power. Service entails

an engagement with the “irreducible alterity” (p. 354) of the Other. By irreducible alterity is meant the “absolute otherness of the Other” (Gehrke, 2010, p. 10), an absolute other whose singularity becomes an ethical site of sensibility and subjectivity (Drabinski, 2001).

Sensibility is an ethical acknowledgment of the absolute singularity of the Other, emphasizing the inevitability of difference. Thus, any attempt to undermine the radical alterity of the different Other constitutes a totalitarian evisceration of the singularity of the Other: “For Levinas, the other singularly frees itself from the power of being ... to erase its alterity and incorporate it in its universalizing and totalizing ‘said’” (Ziarek, 2014, p. 232). For Levinas’s ethic, prior to being, interrogates attempts to systematize the singularity of the Other, calling forth a phenomenological recognition of the Other as an absolute otherness. Levinas’s Other is not an ontological recluse, but a phenomenological Other whose alterity transcends Heidegger’s *Mitsein*—being with others. This is “because in being-with-others in the world, the other is not encountered in his or her singularity; the other does not count or signify *as such*, but only through those shared projects that give the *mit* its particular consistency or pattern” (Perpich, 2008, p. 203). The alterity of the Other, explains Levinas, is singularity. Diane Perpich (2008) states the following about Levinas’s notion of singularity:

[It] expresses the idea that each human being is a unique, irreplaceable self, irreducible to any attributes or qualities that could be used to describe her and that would inevitable reduce her to what she has in common with others. In addition, it expresses the idea that the other has ethical standing. As such, singularity contains with it the idea of persons having equal moral worth and dignity ... expresses the idea that the other concerns the ego not in view of some shared or universal property ... but *simply as such*. (p. 188)

Singularity, therefore, defies instantiations of a totalizing “concept” (Long, 2004).

For Levinas, the recognition of the radical singularity of the Other is grounded in ethical givenness, giving rise to the experience of the Other as an embodied infinite Other “located inside ... the I, which is itself a dialogue, relations between same and other” (Ponzio, 2008, p. 118). This relationship presumes as ethical givenness grounded in a “transcendent desire for good” (Lévinas, 1989, p. 117). The transcendental desire for good involves an unconditional responsibility to the otherness of the Other. Thus, the responsible *I* “yearns for the good” of the Other” in a “face-to-face relationship” (Hutchens, 2004, p. 77). Here lies the ethics of Levinas. It is an “ethics of authenticity” (Taylor, 1991) which is otherwise than an ontological self-centeredness.

Levinas’s ethically constituted good—non-consequentialist in nature—is not self-centered, but other-centered. In the words of Ponzio (2008), “otherness is not out of the sphere of the *I*” (Ponzio, 2008, p. 119). Since the *I* is derivative or imbued with ethical givenness, it avails itself to the Other. Thus, attentiveness to the singularity of the Other is an ethical implicature which addresses responsibility as an exercise of the “good beyond being.” To Levinas responsibility presupposes an “‘open inexhaustible’ horizons” of inviting and hosting the Other.

Zygmunt Baumann and Charles Taylor, drawing on Levinas, critiqued the “diminished moral responsibility” prevalent in the history of modern ethics (Mason, 2001). Baumann and Taylor attributed the problem to an exaggerated confidence in universal epistemological foundations of ethics, leading to the erasure of alterity in systemic epistemic structures. Such is the problem of the Hegelian negative dialectics, which Levinas problematized as totalitarian persecution of alterity (Lyotard, 1986). As Brian Schroeder said,

In Hegelian dialectics, otherness has no meaning apart from its relation with sameness and vice versa. This holds true for every dialectical opposition. While each dyadic term is distinct and knowable as such, its true value lies in the holistic relation that it has with its opposite. Absolute knowing is the process of arriving at this truth since “everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *substance*, but an equally as *Subject* (*PhG*, 19, 10). In the *Phenomenology* and *Logic* the problem of otherness is reconciled in the [negative] dialectics ...

Substance is only realized as Subject only by virtue of its having been mediated by the object of its reflection ... (Schroeder, 2000, p. 48)

Schroeder, in the light of Levinas, pilloried the Hegelian dialectics as an epistemic hegemony that “renders the Absolute as Totality” (p. 49), constituting the Other as the Same. Levinas’s ethics qua ethics, which is otherwise than the Hegelian negative, bring the I “into a genuine relationship with otherness preserving” the singularity of the Other (p. 45). This assumption is corroborated by dialogic ethics scholarships on subaltern studies (see Dutta & Pal, 2010). These scholarships argue—with implicit reference to Levinas—that “epistemic structures” that constitute the singularity of the Other as pariahs “create” an imbalance “in the economy of knowing” (Drabinski, 2011, p. 52).

Levinas’s ethical-phenomenological departure from the West-ontic totality which he considers tyrannical, privileges ethics over epistemology. As Drabinski contended, “*If knowing is obsessed with totality, then we should see the reflection of totalitarianism as such in epistemology*” (p. 52; emphasis original). In other words, epistemic totality is epistemic reductivity. For Levinas, modern ethics, like the rhetorical aphorism, enlightenment’s prejudice against prejudice, is an ethics against ethics. Levinas, however, reverses this thinking, calling forth a

phenomenological ethics that restores the irreducible alterity of the Other. With this radical reversal, Levinas questions the modern understanding of knowledge, especially the bad faith epistemological assumption that alterity finds its identity only in totality. Such flawed methodological assumptions tyrannically *homogenize* otherness.

Levinas's questioning of epistemic erasures that eclipse the singularity of the Other underscores postmodernity's contestation of grand narratives. For Levinas and postmodernity, ethics qua ethics raise questions about the relationship between ethical givenness and the singularity of the Other. The relationship between the two suggests the primacy of responsibility, which for Levinas "is involvement, exposition, proximity of one-for-the-other" (Ponzio, 2008, p. 121). Relationships based on epistemic inequality serve to colonize the singularly different Other under the totalitarian model of abstraction. The totalitarian model of abstraction constitutes a violent imposition of hegemonic views through monolithic constructions that "alter the status and signs of the Other" (Drabinski, 2011, p. 65). Marie Baird (1999), using the Holocaust as an example of epistemic alteration of the Other said,

In my estimation, and in accordance with Levinas's ethical stance, such subservience has the ironic and unintended effect of perpetuating the very kind of thinking that made the Holocaust possible ... because it replaces the ethical preeminence of individual inviolability with the primacy of the ontologically based conceptual system within which the individual ... is then to be understood in an *a posteriori* fashion. Individual inviolability falls prey to the conceptualizing system that defines who may "qualify" as an individual in the first place, thus excluding those whom the system labels "life unworthy of life" because they do

not meet the criteria the system has already established *a priori* as constitutive of human personhood. (pp. 343-344)

Baird's take on the totalizing effects of epistemic imbalance or in the economy of knowing, signal the inevitability of rhetorical prejudice otherwise than ontological and epistemological prejudice. Rhetorical prejudice interrogates the dialectics of epistemology, reverting the conventional ideological belief that prejudice as methodological skepticism is prior to prejudice as a "ground of conviction." This work links the ground of conviction with the singularity of the Other, and situates alterity within the infinity of the Other. The infinity of the Other defies epistemic signification, a routinized caricaturing that fueled inhuman projects that considered defacing the face of the Other a norm.

Jacques Ellul (1985) points to the problematics of epistemic signification, which he argues, breeds a conflation of reality, "believing that a scientific hypothesis is *true* when it is confirmed by experiments. Such a hypothesis has nothing to do with truth, and is merely *accurate* ... this preeminence of reality and this confusion coincide with the universal belief in the 'fact,' taken to be ultimate value" (p. 31). Taken to the extreme, the "fact" *delignifies*, declaring the face of Other *persona non grata* (as in the Holocaust). Levinas warns against the dangers of Ellul's problematic "fact." The fact points to a commitment to totality as the site of alterity—an argument of Hegel, Heidegger and Sartre—which Levinas vehemently opposes.

Epistemic signification, like Ellul's problematic "fact," have the proclivity to, from the perspectives of Levinas, skirt subjectivity, and address objectivity through axiomatic frames. By so doing, the face-of-the-other becomes a commodified object according to normative denotations and connotations. This makes the other a finite, signified other. Levinas's ethics, on the hand, privileges an infinite Other whose singularity cannot be calculated or defined through

the whims and caprices of autarchy. For Levinas, the Other is not object of objectivity, but a subject whose subjectivity is infinite.

The infinite Other cannot be rationally assessed, neither can it be comprehended and described by totalitarian language games. The infinite Other can, therefore, not be sustained by an epistemic dialectic proper to ontological totality. The infinite Other cannot be “sublated” nor interiorized. The infinite Other is irreducible, and “resists any attempt to convert it ... into something that is my own; [it] is not even a theme or a noema that I could “grasp” or encompass by representing or comprehending it” (Peperzak, 1993, p. 134). The infinite Other breeds a derivative awareness. From the stand point of this work, the derivative awareness is a phenomenologically engaged dialogic grounded in an ethical relation.

An ethical relation is a derivative experience of alterity. Levinas describes it as a relationship “where the Other is not merely heard, seen, or felt, but where the self is receptive to the revelation of the difference and it thereby moved to a level of responsibility” (Todd, 2003, p. 52). This ethical responsiveness to the alterity of the Other could be described as phenomenological *agape* in the tradition of Pauline unconditional love. For Levinas, the unconditional is asymmetrical because it entails an obligation “to the other without any expectation of obligation in return” (Katz, 2003, p. 70). Judith Butler (2012) speaks of the Levinas’s ethical relation as ethical responsiveness to the Other. Butler states: “Levinas ... gave us a conception of ethical relations that make us ethically responsive to those who exceed our immediate sphere of belonging and to whom we nevertheless belong, regardless of any choice or contract” (p. 23). For Butler, the ethical relation is an infinite obligation.

Infinite obligation is an “unavoidable call” to respond to the ethical givenness of the subjective *I*. In Levinas’s (Levinas, 1991; 1986) terms, infinite obligation is an a priori condition

of “answerability” and being “hostage.” The conditions of answerability and being hostage intrinsically connect “the experience of conscience” to “horizontal relationality” (Fleming, 2015). The experience of conscience is a primordial moral responsiveness—a voice of ethics—to the alterity of the Other. In this case conscience is prior to consciousness. Conscience is a moral responsibility that engages the good as beyond being. Consciousness, on the other hand, valorizes being, giving rise to an abstract ethics constituted by conditionalities that problematize infinite obligation as an embodied derivative ethical responsibility.

For Levinas, infinite obligation derives from the experience of conscience, bringing the notion of horizontal relationality as a dialogic standpoint central to the nature of the responsible *I*. The *I* assumes the derivative call of responsibility to the alterity of the Other. The derivative call is not an option but an obsession with the relational face of a command through which the *I* becomes, first and foremost, “a servant of” the Other (Levinas, 1991, p. 87). The metaphor of servant, in the Levinasian context is otherwise than the Hegelian master/slave relationship. The servant is a relational, responsive and dialogic ethical *I* whose singularity is not egocentric but altruistic. This understanding of infinite obligation is similar to what is meant in *Ubuntu* ethics as “I am because you are.” In *Ubuntu* ethics, the *I* is derivatively constructed, emphasizing the ethical responsibility of the individual toward others. Key to Levinas is the idea that the *Ubuntu* ethics of “I am because you are,” is an infinite responsibility.

The Levinasian ethical givenness is a responsiveness. It is an ethical phenomenological response that involves the recognition and protection of the singularity of the Other. Arnett, Fritz and Holba (2007a) describe this as a “turn toward Otherness” (p. 127). This work engages the metaphor of turning toward Otherness as a Levinasian phronetic response to the inevitability of prejudice. Bias is the ground of the Other. Attempts to colonize and sanitize the ground of

conviction of the Other is tantamount to phenomenological genocide. Levinas reminds us of this banality when says, “It is banal to say we never exist in the singular ... I see the other; but I *am* not the other” (Levinas, 1985, p. 58; cited in Arnett, 2005, p.200). Levinas bring to this project and communication ethics a theory that frames the inevitability of rhetorical prejudice within the phenomenological assumptions of dialogic ethic.

The Dialogic of Ethical Responsibility

Levinasian ethics is a turn toward an a priori command. It is a derivative “command to action” (Wyschogrod, 1974, p. 94), not an originaive agent of metaphysics. At the heart of the response is a dialogic that requires the primacy of ethics. Levinas defines ethics in terms of horizontal relationality—“otherness” within “the sphere of the *I*” (Ponzio, 2008). It is within horizontal relationality that the face of the Other is encountered. The encounter invokes a sense of obligation, an infinite responsibility. For Levinas, horizontal relationality, which is otherwise than a metaphysical relation, is a primordial response to the face of the Other. Horizontal relationality points to a phenomenological presence (see Arnett, 2004, p. 86), and commands a derivative response within the Levinasian notion of invocation: “Levinas maintains that the relation with the other which is preceded by neither representation nor comprehension can be termed ‘invocation’” (Wyschogrod, 1974, p. 94). Levinas engaged the metaphor of invocation within the Kantian construct of obligation. The obligation takes the form of a command—infinite responsibility to the face of the Other. That is to say, “the experience of the infinite demand of the other’s face defines the ethical subject in terms of a split between self and an exorbitant demand that it can never meet, the demand” of infinite responsibility (Critchley, 2007, p. 40).

Dialogue stems from the responsibility to the face of the Other. The relationship between dialogue and responsibility is a “voice of ethics” (Lipari, 2009b), which Levinas (1969) says, “is to recognize the mastery of the other, to receive his command, or, more exactly, to receive from him the command to command” (p. 178). The recognition and reception of the Other points to a “listening otherwise,” (Lipari, 2009b), a sense of a “gymnastics of attention” (Weil, 1952; cited in Eppert, 2004, p. 46), which involves the waiting of the *I* to receive the singularity of the Other. The dialogic, for Levinas, and the sense in which it is engaged in this work, is about the responsibility of the *I*—“responsive ethical I” (Arnett, 2004)—whose responsiveness is not therapeutic but derivative. The dialogic is an ethical reversal of the ontologic. While the former is about asymmetrical relations that recognize difference, the latter valorizes dialectical relations which “rest[s] upon the totalitarianism or imperialism of the Same” (Peperzak et al., 1996, p. 14). The responsive ethical *I*, by virtue of its derivative openness to difference, dialogically engages the singularity of the Other from the standpoint of a “bad conscience,” a moral conscious act that propels the *I* to examine its conscience by asking, “Did I deface the face of the Other?”

The dialogic relation is inseparable from responsibility. “Responsibility is involvement, exposition, proximity” of the *I* for the Other. The infinite responsibility of the *I* to the singularity of the Other is reflected in the obligation of the responsive ethical *I* “to the otherness relationship, to dialogism. The *I* in itself is already in dialogue” (Ponzio, 2008, p. 121). This primordial dialogic is always comprised, according to Levinas (1969), of the metaphor “ethics is an optics” (p. 23). For Levinas, the optics proceed from an ethical responsibility that transcends epistemic experience. Rather, it is an experience beyond epistemic vision “bereft of the synoptic and totalizing objectifying virtues of vision, a relation or intentionality of a wholly different type” (p. 23). The optics are a phenomenological presence of the Other.

From the standpoint of the dialogic and ethical responsibility, the responsive ethical *I* is constituted as an impicature of infinity, not totality. Thus, dialogic responsibility finds its articulation in an optics that invoke the vision of the face of the Other in terms of an infinite command. The infinite command involves seeing the face of the Other as a visual infinity rather than a visible totality. This sense of the infinite command as visual recognition of the singularity of the Other is reflected in Levinas's response to Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *The Little Prince's* obsession with conventional, epistemic-ontologic perception of reality. The little prince claiming knowledge of the image of a sheep, rejects several versions of the sheep he wants drawn for him. Finally, he accepts a drawing of a box with holes in it, when he was told the sheep was in the box, asleep. Levinas's (1999) response to this quandary was,

I do not know how to draw the solution to insoluble problems. It is still sleeping in the bottom of a box; but a box over which a person who have drawn close to each other keep watch. I have no other than the idea of the idea that one should have. The abstract drawing of the parallelogram—cradle of our hope. I have the idea of a possibility in which the impossible may be sleeping. (p. 89)

Levinas' response is, in fact, a reaction to the apocalyptic epistemic-ontology of the modernist project: ontology's dismissiveness of ethics. For Levinas, ethics is a possibility within which visuality is sleeping. Visuality connotes infinity—the visual face of the Other is (far in) infinity. The face of the Other is not according to the perceptions of mass totality since, according to Levinas (1969), the face of the Other is a “vision without an image” (p. 23). In a similar vein, attempts to reduce ethics to epistemic ontological perceptions of reality constitutes a “phenomenological lie” because ethics is a “vision without an image.” In others words, Levinas *infinitizes* ethics, making it prior to the totalizing effects of ontological judgment.

Infinity like visibility can only be “experienced in the most radical sense since we can never bring to it a structure of intentionality adequate to it. It is therefore a genuine relation with what is other than ourselves. We cannot reintegrate its alterity into the same” (Wyschogrod, 1974, p. 92). Levinas’s ethics apropos of horizontal relationality visualizes the face of the Other as an infinite alterity that transcends totality. Totality is about visibility, and it *judges a book prior to its content*.

Dialogic responsibility is a question of visibility, an attentiveness to the phenomenological presence of the Other that commands the *I* to assume a responsive vocation, such as Albert Camus’s courage to confront absurdity, steeped in ethical calls. Attentiveness to the phenomenological presence of the Other is a response to ethics as visibility becomes “the listening eye” (Schroeder, 2005). The listening eye in Levinasian ethics is an ocular response to the disclosures of singularities. It is an ocular response to the alterity of the Other which allows a polyvisual attention. It originates in the infinite space of the Other. Polyvisual attention commands an unconditional obligation, a responsibility that cannot be ignored. It is a vision that is beyond ontological prescriptions and proscriptions. These constitute, to Levinas, a possessive epistemic compulsion that makes claim of absolute knowledge of the alterity of the Other. The responsive ethical *I*, according to Levinas, recognizes the alterity of the Other within an infinite ethics of responsibility for the face of the Other. Levinas’s infinite ethics of responsibility is attentive to—not possessive of—the demands of the face of Other.

Reflecting on the dialogic imports of Levinas’s view on ethical responsibility, Arnett (2012a) argues that

The “I” is called to responsibility, particularly through thought on how to assist a unique Other and how to take into account the neighbor, ever attentive to

implications of a given action for an unseen neighbor. It is the neighbor that decenters dialogue; one only grows in and through acts of responsibility for a unique Other within a neighborhood composed of the unknown, the unseen, and the unforgotten. (pp. 152-153)

Unlike Sartre's ontological solidarity, Levinas's dialogic responsibility emerges from what Irving Greenberg (1981) calls "covenantal responsibility," i.e., responding to the hidden presence—the hidden sheep in the little prince's box—of the infinite alterity of the Other.

Dialogue and Otherness

The issue of dialogue and otherness is a phenomenological-ethical relationship that transgresses totality (see Levinas, 1969, p. 30), bringing the Same and the Other within the proximity of each other—"distance in the proximity of the Other." Proximity does not mean the collapse of distance, rather it is an "absolute distance" between the Same and the Other. By way of what I call *enthymematic intersubjectivity*, Levinas's notion of proximity illustrates "moments of meeting" (Cissna & Anderson, 2002), charged with the ethical exigency for responsibility for the singularity of the Other. The ethical exigency points to "an ipso facto election ... This election signifies the most radical possible engagement" (Peperzak et al., 1996, p. 18).

Enthymematic intersubjectivity is a performatively engaged ethics that confirms the singularity of the Other "in its ipseity" (p. 18). Central to Levinas's notion of dialogic relationality is enthymematic intersubjective. That is, the I is ipso facto obligated to the face of the Other. The obligation to the face of the Other involves a recognition and/or acknowledgment of radical alterity.

It is perhaps, in this context, that Levinas speaks of transcendence as signification of difference. Levinas (1998b) writes, “The distance or absolute alterity of transcendence signifies *by itself* the difference and the relationship between the I and the You as interlocutors ... This absolute distance is refractory to the synthesis that the synoptic gaze of a third would like to establish between two humans beings in dialogue” (p. 145). The absolute distance between the I and the You denotes a phenomenological-enthymematic relationship where signification signifies itself in the saying that interrogates the said. Interrogation is an essential component of the ethical relationship for Levinas, especially “to his rethinking of subjectivity, to his demand that we acknowledge the founding role of the Other ... and to his insistence that” relationships that sublimate “the alterity of the Other” are, in fact, violent interiorization of difference into similarity (Chanter, 2001, p. 145). In contrast to the ontological interiorization of the singularity of the Other—through “the subordination of the Saying to the Said” (Levinas, 1991, p. 7)—Levinas posits an ethics of radical exteriority which prioritizes the Saying, and provide ethical openings to listening.

The Saying’s corollary companion to engaging an ethics of openness with and from the Said is tantamount to authenticating subjectivity. Bernard Lonergan, Jesuit theologian and a philosopher in the phenomenological tradition, uses the metaphor *authentic subjectivity* to connect the bias ground of the Other with self-transcendence to warn against dangers of epistemic omniscience. Lonergan (2014) argues that postmodernity, an era of plurality of subjectivities, summons an a priori command: “Authentic subjectivity, the subjectivity of the person who is attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible” (p. 339). Lonergan’s warning offers insight into Levinas’s evolutionary phenomenological ethics of radical exteriority: an ethical

opening to listening with the added emphasis, the Saying which invites the Said to open itself to the difference of the Other as well as listen to the alterity of the Other.

Thus, the Saying is an ethical openness to the singularity of the Other or the otherness of the Other. Unlike the Said, which is an “ontological closure,” the Saying is a dialogic openness in the form of enthymematic listening; that is, listening to the difference between the I and You. It is in listening to this difference that the I makes a “phenomenological movement” from totalitarian ethics to an “ethics of responsibility for the Other,” connecting “one to the universal charge for another, charged with the obligation to discern the particulars of response and communicative engagement” (R. Arnett, 2012a, p. 140). For Levinas, the Saying is prior to the Said because the former prioritizes attentive listening to the Other—listening, not in the Lockean epistemic tradition, in the “listening for the Other” construct of Lipari (2004). With Levinas, Arnett, and Lipari, this work contends that the Saying entails a proximate listening to the bias ground of the Other.

Thus, Levinas’s phenomenological ethics emphasizes the proximate listening to the Other. Lipari (2009b) proposes a call for listening otherwise as “a doorway to the ethical response” (p. 45) to radical alterity. Listening is important for the relationship between dialogic and otherness. Listening is dialogic because it intuitively—visualizes, not *visibilizes*—the face within the proximity of the Other. The Said creates the illusion that prejudice is grounded upon ontological infallibility of common sense, the fallacy of the Enlightenment project. The Saying, with its proclivity to listen to Other, assumes a derivative responsibility in the form of proximate attentiveness Levinas would call “impersonal attentiveness” (R. Arnett, 2012a). Simone Weil (1952) describes this attentiveness as “gymnastics of attention” (Eppert, 2004). For Levinas, the gymnastics is a proximate listening that summons the derivative *I* to receive the uniqueness of

the different Other. Listening is responding to the summons “of the Other, and to recognize the other as other yet also in proximity” (Gehrke, 2010, p. 17). I might go as far as to say that listening is a category of enthymematic intersubjectivity, receiving the incomprehensible Other, including the bias of the Other and the trace of *illeity*, *AS IS*.

The relation between the Saying and the Said is enthymematic intersubjective echo: “‘Here I am’ ... a posture of openness—a readiness to listen to the other who is at once hidden and about to be revealed” (Lipari, 2012, p. 238). A microcosm of “this posture of a listening receptivity” (p. 238) is reflected in

Levinas’s focus was on an unseen neighbor who shapes us with a haunting call — do not forget that you affect our neighborhood and your unseen neighbors; be responsible for those not present. He answered the call to be the principal and director of École Normal Israélite Orientale (ENIO), a school for Jewish students in Paris, from 1946 to 1979. Levinas lived in an educational neighborhood and each day reminded the young of their responsibility to attend to the neighbor, to those not present. Levinas and the young found the reality of dialogue in a life ever cognizant of responsibility “beyond dialogue.” (R. Arnett, 2012a)

In *Beyond Dialogue*, Arnett (2012a) explores the relationship between dialogue and alterity, drawing on Levinas’ phenomenological ethics. Arnett situates Levinas’ “beyond dialogue” within the embedded responsibility of the “I” toward the Other and “impersonal attentiveness guiding both the engagement with a unique human face” (p. 152). Arnett explains Levinas’ impersonal attentiveness as engaging a responsive ethical “I” “that is played out in the particular with thinking about a concrete person situated within a larger world” (p. 151). Impersonal attentiveness gives rise to listening that is attentive to difference without imposing epistemic

endoxa in a coherent public fashion, pointing toward what Richard Sennett (1974) calls tyranny of intimacy (see Arnett et al., 2010). Christopher Poulos (2008) describes this as “dialogic imagination”; it “opens up in the aimless, uncharted spaces of talk merging ... of transcendent meaning and connection emerging spontaneously from our co-presence” (p. 122). It is in this imagination that we find in an opening for listening to Otherness.

For Levinas, the *I* is derivative, (Arnett, 2003), and its responsiveness to the Other “manifests in what we might call ‘dialogic ethics’”(Lipari, 2012); it is an enthymematic intersubjective relationship that involves an invite and a response within proximate distance. The enthymematic intersubjective relationship opens the *I* to the invitational response of the Other. Levinas considers this response a prior condition of the *I*. The invitational response moves the *I* from the “nominative” to the “accusative” from the “willful agent” to the “responsive derivative” (Arnett, 2003). The *I* responds to the accusations of the Other. Levinas articulates this in his reference to the *Brothers Karamazov*: “We are all guilty for everything and everyone, and I more than all the others” (2001, p. 133; see Lipari, 2012 and Ponzio, 2008). As Lipari said, within every response is a latent “prior action,” listening. The responsive *I* ethically “bears witness” to the summons of the Other, listening attentively to the singularity of the Other.

From the standpoint of dialogic and communication ethics, attentive listening is integral of dialogue. A Ghanaian Ewe proverb alerts people to the importance dialogic relationship with nature and others within the safe stance of attentive listening: *The pig always keeps a listening eye while wallowing in a mud hole*. This proverb foregrounds the notion of dialogic sensitivity and sensibility reflective of the polymodal metaphor of a *listening eye/I*. Levinas’s work represents a paradigm shift, a watershed that the ethical *I* represents in marking responsibility as attentive listening, and poses a dialogic challenge to epistemic constructs that colonize and

totalize radical alterity in the name of “universal truths.” Karl Rahner, a Jesuit theologian, alerts the Western Catholic of this danger, calling on the church to recognize “the essential differences” of others with a “Pauline boldness” (1979, p. 274). Within the spirit of Levinas’s ethics, Pauline boldness is “a listening that does not merely tolerate but openly embraces difference, misunderstanding, and uncertainty, and invites entrance to a human communication and consciousness beyond discursive thinking, to dwelling places of understanding that language cannot, as yet, reach” (Lipari, 2010, p. 360). The metaphor of Pauline boldness permits the courage to accept the invitation to acknowledge the singularity of the Other. It is an ethics of otherness that might be called a *listening eye/I*. The listening eye/*I* situates connection between dialogue and alterity within the *phronetic* enthymematic intersubjectivity: “I see the other; but I am not the other” (Levinas, 1985, p. 58).

I want to sum this project by revisioning the Buber-Levinas encounter, not as a dialogic impasse, but as an enthymematic intersubjectivity respectful of the alterity of the Other. The encounter could be perceived polymodally as a Galileo proof that the earth is spherical, not flat. In their journey around the world, Buber and Levinas head in an opposite—east/west—direction. The two encounter each other midway in their journey around the earth, and with each holding on to his ground of conviction, voyaged pass the each other only to come face-to-face whence they started their journey. Holding on to one’s prejudicial ground does not foreclose on attentiveness to the ground of the Other. The prejudicial grounds of alterity invite and command listening to the “dialectical unity of contrasting extremes” (Arnett, 2005, p. 205) underscoring responsibility for the Other.

Just as I was about wrapping up this chapter, a message popped up on my *WhatsApp*. It was from a friend, sharing an inspirational quote with me:

When the two ears are put side by side it forms the shape of the heart.

Interestingly, the word 'ear' sits right in the middle of the word 'heart' (h-ear-t).

The ear is the way to the heart. So, if you want someone's heart, learn to listen to him/her. If you want God's heart, learn to listen to His Spirit in you.

Levinas's project is not about wanting the heart of the other person in an erotic sense, but wanting in a phenomenological sense, wanting as an ethics of listening in and to the heart of the Other, though radically different is beyond commensurability and comprehensibility.

CHAPTER SEVEN—The Ground of Dialogue: Prejudice Otherwise than Closure

The history of prejudice problematizes epistemic and ontological impositions that are dismissive of the “ground of conviction.” Caricatured as “prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition of its power” (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 273), the concept constitutes a volatile mixture—*episteme* and *doxa*, which breed an apocalyptic violence against the ontologically constituted other. In the context of this dissertation, prejudice is constituted as recasting subjective universality, universal singularities and particularities, embodied and situated suspicion, the ethical single individual, and the derivative “I” as non-conventional approaches to understanding bias as a communicative necessity. Prejudice, thus outlined, is about *opening* otherwise than *closing* that culminates in the inviscid flow of dialogic communication.

In emphasizing opening, prejudice, from the standpoint of this work, is reminiscent of epideictic discourse—to bring *aletheia* out into the open (Jasinski, 2001). The *aletheia* here is a not an ontological truth, but a phenomenological truth with an ethical underpinning. The former is characterized by method and control that seek to destroy grounds of conviction through systemic colonization of difference. The latter, on the other hand, activates “dialogue as a discursive interaction that seeks understanding and involves asking questions, expressing opinions, making assertions, passing judgment, and intuiting needs of others according to tacitly understood practices of mutuality and reciprocity even in the face of opposition and contradiction” (Smith, 2008, pp. 161-161). In other words, prejudice is a fundamental opening that possibilitizes difference as dialogic. Difference is an unavoidable condition of human plurality (Arendt, 1998). The point here is not to posit some form of dialogic prejudice, but make the argument that “philosophy’s forgetfulness” of prejudice is tantamount to what called Don Ambrose (2012) scornfully called “utopian dogmatism.” Utopian dogmatism becomes “a blind dogmatism that

can generate ... oppression” (p. 105). For Taylor (1985), the culmination of blind dogmatism was the “ethnocentric gaucherie” of modernity (p. 127). Taylor’s warning calls for a “perspicuous terms of understanding,” that is, “getting in tune” with difference (p. 128). The existential attunement to difference resonates with the “dialogic ethical competence” of Arnett, Bell and Fritz (2010), which prioritizes learning from difference. Learning from difference is grounded in attentiveness and works within the Levinasian ethical praxis: a listening eye/I, an attentiveness to the biased ground of the Other. As Iris Marion Young (1997) reiterated, the first principle of dialogic engagement is acknowledging difference; what make this possible is when we “open” and “suspend” our “assumptions in order to listen” (p. 53). For Gadamer (1975/1989), “Anyone who listens is fundamentally open. Without this kind of openness to one another there is no human relationship. Belonging to together always means being able to listen to one another” (p. 355). Listening is a learning opportunity. It offers dialogic opening for enthymematic interaction with the bias ground of the other. Likewise, prejudice takes shape within the negotiated space of “fundamental openness” to difference.

In *Situating Dialogic Ethics*, Arnett argues that “the tainted or biased ground is the beginning of a dialogic ethic engaged in the meeting of the Other. The dialogic emphasis upon tainted ground requires, in addition, a pragmatic admission of bias as a public warning, a form of *dialogic confession* in an era of narrative and virtue contention” (2011b, p. 58). Arnett explains the relevancy of prejudice in detail when asked about relationship dialogue and communication ethics in his work. He says:

...in the emphasis on ground or narrative as *a priori*—dialogue begins before people in conversation meet; we carry a ground-laden, a tory-laden, bias into the discourse...Ground is the bias, or what Gadamer would call the fundamental

prejudice, with which one enters the interpretive act of dialogue...The notion of ground or narrative difference moves communication ethics to a non-humanistic position. The issue is not that I am in dialogue with you; I am in dialogue with the ground upon which you stand—which is the issue of embedded agents discourse.

(Pat Arneson, 2007, pp. 64-65)

The above quote is a move away from an originary, monologic discourse to a derivative, dialogic discourse that invites one to encounter the ground of the Other. Communication ethics and dialogue come together as one comes to grips with the inevitability of encountering and learning from differing narrative grounds without falling prey to relativism (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 65).

We live in an era of marked difference, making prejudice a rhetorical necessity in every dialogic encounter. Rhetorical slogans such as “Black lives Matter,” “Make America Great Again,” “Brexit” and ongoing crisis in the Middle East, to mention a few, exemplify prejudice as dialogic necessity that call for attentiveness to both univocality and multivocality. This dissertation is concerned with the rhetorical operations that appear within and support the struggle to oppose and reconstitute difference. Rather than deploying totalitarian tools that are dismissive of difference, Camus, for example, called for standing one’s tainted ground courageously. In one of his famous mottos, “I rebel, therefore, we resist” (1971, p. 28), Camus sought such a (dialogic) courage to help him resist the absurdity of the French ideological totalitarianism in Algeria. This work understands Camus’ resistance as the courage to accept and engage prejudice. Prejudice is a “primordial first home”; “It is the provincial welcome” of difference (Arnett, 2008a). Simone de Beauvoir (1948) alludes to the connection between prejudice and dialogic ethics when she opined that individuality and the tainted ground are

symbiotic. By the same token, the individual ground of conviction cannot be justified without acknowledging the ground of the other:

If it is true that every project emanates from subjectivity, it is true also that this subjectivity movement establishes by itself a surpassing of subjectivity. [Wo]man can find a justification in his [her] own existence only in the existence of other [wo]men ... I concern others and they concern me ... The me-other relationship is so indissoluble ... (p. 72)

This insight illustrates the contemporaneity of the biased ground and dialogic ethics, and exploring this connection helps to explain the project's communicative relevance and its central claims about the inevitability of prejudice in dialogic ethics. As a dialogic concept, prejudice is both a *techne* and a *praxis* that interrogate the totalitarian assumptions of progress and agency as well as forms of communitarianism that "grant presumptive allegiance to traditional beliefs, norms and practices" (Whedbee, 1998, p. 173). Dialogic ethics interrogate conformity, the tyranny of precedent, and common sense, while acknowledging the tainted ground or narrative difference.

Arendt's notion of judgment based on Homeric impartiality, is an insightful remainder of the necessity prejudice for dialogic ethics. Impartiality is attentive openness to the tainted ground or narrative difference. According to Arendt (2006),

Homer chose to sing the deeds of the Trojans no less than those of the Achaeans, and to praise the glory of Hector, the foes of the defeated man, no less than the glory of Achilles, the hero of his kinfolk. That had happened nowhere before; no civilization, however splendid, had been able to look with equal upon friend and foe, upon success and defeat—which since Homer have not been recognized as

ultimate standards of [wo]men's judgment, even though they are ultimates for the destinies of [wo]men's lives. Homeric impartiality ... is the root of all so-called objectivity—this curious passion, unknown outside Western civilization, for intellectual integrity at any price. (p. 258)

Homeric impartiality is a precursor of the postmodern assumption that “dialogic learning as first principle embraces diversity and difference ... [and] the recognition that there is ‘one’ communication ethic” (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 112). The rhetorical rhythm of everydayness is a Homeric impartial response to prejudice, not a Cartesian methodological computation of truth as consistency. The impartial response is a dialectically engaged “enlarged mentality”; it allows both the acknowledgment and engagement of differing viewpoints. Dialogic ethics assume Arendt's notion of enlarged mentality in human communication, inviting attentive openness to prejudice, whether singular or plural.

Dialogic ethics refuse to stand above history and cast judgment from the standpoint of methodological consistency. Rather dialogic ethics dialectically—not in the Hegelian sense—engage different narratives with Homeric boldness. This work frames prejudice as a phenomenological and existential ethical necessity, which propel the “the interpretive act of dialogue” (Pat Arneson, 2007, p. 64). It sees the interpretive act of dialogue as Gadamer sees it in philosophical hermeneutics and as Schrag sees it in “rhetorical intentionality.”

Thus, Gadamer writes:

That is why a hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start, sensitive to ... alterity. But this kind of sensitivity involves neither “neutrality” with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self, but the foregrounding and appropriation of one's own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is

to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one's own meanings. (1975/1989, pp. 271-272)

And Schrag:

The distinctive stamp of rhetorical intentionality is that it reaches out toward, aims at, is directed to the other as hearer, reader, and audience. The intentionality illustrates not the theoretical reflection of cognitive detachment but rather the practical engagement of concrete involvement ... The rhetor ... calls for deliberative action and reasoned judgment. Within this intentionality of engagement, the ethical issue is unavoidably broached ... Rhetoric as the directedness of discourse to the other, soliciting a response, is destined to slide into ethics. (1986, pp. 198-199; cited in Langsdorf, 2008, p. 246)

Thus, the interpretive act of dialogue is, fundamentally, enthymematic pluralism. It favors an enthymematic intersubjective and horizontal relationality relationship that encapsulates the centrality of the tainted ground in every dialogic encounter. The question of prejudice leads not only to its history but provides an explanation of how the concept had been engaged in the history of Western philosophy. Chapters two through six explored the different moments in which there has been a dedicated reference to prejudice, however implicit: Aristotle's interpretation as it is applied to *epistemic endoxai* and enthymematic understanding; Paul's conception of universalism and eventual truth, the irony of epistemological suspicion in William Shakespeare's comedies and plays; Soren Kierkegaard's derivative individual and; Emmanuel Levinas's derivative "I."

These precursors illustrate the connection between prejudice and dialogic ethics. Dialogue begins with the acknowledgment of the phenomenological reality of ground and its inevitability in dialogic engagement. We live in an era of differing viewpoints. This is why Lyotard called for replacing master narratives with petite narratives. His call is a response to the postmodern demand: dialectic plurality. Lyotard's call was, however, presaged in the history of the concept of prejudice—the tainted ground—and its effect on human communication.

Prejudice: A Prophecy “Come of Age”

The etymology of prejudice leads to prejudgment not as character flaw that manifests itself as pathological bias, but as the epistemological ground for judgment, especially individual reasoning process. For Aristotle, the enthymeme, *epistemic endoxa*, *techne*, and *phronesis* were specialized modes of rhetorical discourse that foreground human judgment. *Epistemic endoxa* was seen as popular beliefs and expressions as well as a discursive substratum of judgment. The discourse of *epistemic endoxa* was enthymematic understanding. *Epistemic endoxa* privileged respect for culturally situated opinions or beliefs as well as the ability to acknowledge the truths or viewpoints of the other. *Epistemic endoxa* had the potential for the construction of a more rigorous system of knowledge. Within these modes of rhetorical discourse was the role of subjective universality as a communicative practice tied to the notion of prejudice.

Contextual meaning of the Christ event is a central theme of Paul's non-conventional sense of universalism. For Paul, prejudice is driven by a rhetoric of universal singularity which takes into account difference as the biased ground of otherness. Universal singularity addresses Paul's notion of universalism as problematized prejudice which bears witness to the Christ event as rhetorical points that are determined to express meanings in the face of differences. Paul's

universal singularity portrays prejudice as a dialogically constituted ethics. Perhaps more than any other, Shakespeare endeavored to explain suspicion as a dialogic implicature of prejudice. Suspicion questions the primacy of agency, and articulates the ground of conviction, directing attention to the existential ethical reality of situatedness.

Prejudice, for Kierkegaard, deconstructs modernity's flawed understanding of individuality. The individual is a totalitarian construction of social mores which Kierkegaard called leveling. Kierkegaard questioned the modern obsessiveness with the notion of the mass public, calling forth an existential turn to an ethical power to the single individual, a derivative self. What drives the derivative self is subjective freedom. It is a freedom from modernity's social colonization of the self, making the self originaive rather than derivative. The bias that Kierkegaard brings to the history of prejudice is single ethical individual. Levinas expands the notion of prejudice beyond Kierkegaard's derivative self to a responsive "I" otherwise than originaive agency. Levinas suggests a face-to-face encounter that exemplifies prejudice's relationship with the ethical and dialogic as a phenomenological attentiveness to radical alterity. Prejudice is the incomprehensible face of the Other in Levinas's ethics.

The notion of prejudice advanced in this work brings to light the necessity of the ground of conviction as a communicative praxis with transformative potentials. The concept's potential for dialogic transformation is evident Schrag's engagement of Guattari's notion of transversality in terms of "in-between" which gives rise to enthymematic understanding (see Ramsey & Miller, 2003, p. 24). In this regard, Gadamer (1987) held that understanding involves the

The suspension of one's prejudices, whether this involves another person through whom one learns one's own nature and limits, or an encounter with a work of art, or a text: always something more is demanded than to understand the other, that is to seek and acknowledge the

immanent coherence contained within the meaning claim of the other. (p. 87; cited in Roy and Starosta, 2001, p. 8)

Understanding—opening up to prejudices—involves the “fusion of horizons” (Gadamer, 1975/1989). Understanding situated in prejudice entails the “dialectical questioning” (Arnett, 2007a, p. 67) of a status quo, deconstructing the modern totalitarian emphasis on progress. That is, negotiating rather than imposing difference; acknowledging rather than dismissing particularities; opening rather than closing. The Pentecost event in the Acts of the Apostles drives home this point.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ... everyone heard them speak in his own language. (Acts 2:4-7)

The dialogic implication of the Pentecost event is that difference is protean

The Pentecost event foreshadowed the postmodern preoccupation with the provincial ground of conviction, on the one hand, and the invitation to bracket one’s prejudices so as to recognize, acknowledge, or receive the different ground others. The disciples stood and announced their ground of conviction, inviting the audience to open themselves to an inevitable possibility, difference. The communicative implication of the Pentecost event is that dialogic understanding entails prejudice otherwise than closure.

A definitive characteristic of dialogue is openness to difference. Openness involves standing one grounds of bias and as well as listening to the invitation to difference. Dialogue is an enthymematic understanding that requires the cocreation of meaning without losing one’s prejudicial, biased, or narrative ground. Buber alludes to the necessity of the biased ground as “a place that can be counted upon as we explore new terrain and make contact with others” (Arnett, 1992, p. 55). Buber sees the connection between prejudice and dialogue through what he calls

unity of contraries, reminding us of how one's fundamental ground invites the embeddedness of difference. Thus, prejudice is fundamental to dialogue. Prejudice is primal in dialogic understanding.

The necessity for prejudice in dialogic understanding moves communication from the apocalyptic paradigm, which served the totalizing conditions of the Enlightenment and modernity, to an eschatological paradigm. The eschatological paradigm nourishes the dialogic implicature of prejudice. The dialogic implicature of prejudice features in Badiou's reading of Pauline universalism. Badiou's Paul offers a non-conventional sense of universalism, a reconfiguration of truth as universal singularity otherwise than universal generality. Universal singularity, for Badiou, privileges prejudice as a fundamental ground of conviction. Badiou suggests that prejudice is a truth procedure that interrogates monological impositions inimical to dialogue. This project advocates that prejudice opens and transforms "blind rationality," and promotes ethical relations dialogically.

From a dialogic standpoint, prejudice is a truth event that connects a singularity to a universal, a provincial to a cosmopolitan, a value context to an absolute ethic, a principle to a story, and a petite narrative to a humanistic logic. Through these connections, prejudice illuminate ethics as an infinity of disclosure. The dialogic consequence of ethics as a disclosure involves an authentic response the ethical reality of difference. Levinas understands the ethical reality of difference as an asymmetrical process of responsive-giving, an idea that Lipari (2009b) describes as a form of "empathy," "compassion," and "understanding" that ruptures the force of brazen homogeneity. Prejudice, in this case, is an invitation to "awareness," "rhetorical listening," and "moral sensitivity" to the "unfamiliar" (see Lipari, 2009b; Tompkins, 2009). As an invitation, prejudice deemphasizes modernity's "habits of the heart," individualism, calling

forth a turn to enthymematic intersubjectivity. This call to enthymematic intersubjectivity constitutes the postmodern emphasis on individuality that was foreshadowed by Tocqueville (1969) in *Democracy in America* (see Arnett, 2007b).

As such, prejudice decenters the dogmatic confidence in monologic impositions that point to the ontological connection between individualism and totalitarianism, and provides a model for a communicative praxis that begins in the phenomenological, not ontological, narrative ground of difference. Postmodernity proclivity for difference celebrates prejudice as a phenomenological empowerment of individuality, and dethrones the ruling oligarchy of individualism. Prejudice, thus, offers a disclosure, dialogic opportunities for engaging relationships that rest on the desire for enthymematic intersubjectivity. Individuality and enthymematic intersubjectivity go hand in hand. This is central to the Kierkegaardian notion of dialogic irony, an existential-phenomenological ethics of individual responsibility which Kierkegaard develops out of his reading and understanding of the Socratic elenchus. Unlike, leveling, an ontological sterilization of difference and violent cooptation of individuality, dialogic irony privileges a derivative “self” as an *a priori* human trait. Levinas further develops the notion of the derivative self when he called for an ethics of responsibility toward radical alterity. For Levinas, prejudice is prior “origivative agency.” Prejudice is an *a priori* communicative praxis that ethically invites an attentive listening to difference.

The Dialogic Implicature of Prejudice

The question of prejudice brings us to attentive listening. The process of prejudice is the “*implicate order*” (Bohm, 1983) to listening (see Lipari, 2009b). Martin Luther King, Jr.’s *I Have a Dream* speech illuminates the dialogic implicature of prejudice and its ethical necessity

in human communication. King's speech invites and implicates the I as a derivative creature ethically responsive to the radically different other. The *I Have a Dream* speech unmasks the ethical necessity for listening to difference in an a racially segregated America. In the process of unmasking the ethical necessity for listening, King engages a dialogic implicature, that of learning from monologic assumptions/impositions that dehumanize otherness: "One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we've come here to dramatize a shameful condition" (King, 1986, p. 217). The gathering, aimed at dramatizing humanity's prejudice against the differing ground of otherness constitutes a dialogic implicature: "listening to the historical situation, attentiveness to emergent questions, and dialogic negotiation of emergent answers, providing an outline" for the "dialogic ethical competence" (Arnett et al., 2010, p. 111). Listening as an ethical implicature underscores the postmodern dialogic ethical demands, attentive learning as "moments of meaning" (Cissna & Anderson, 2002) charged with "tensional ethical practice," that is, negotiating contending narratives without losing one's own ground or colonizing the ground of the other (Stewart & Zediker, 2000, p. 224).

The dialogic implicature of prejudice privileges *ethos* as a listening act over *logos* as a "humanistic commitment to agency and control" (Arnett, 2007b, p. 122). The *ethos* of prejudice and how it problematizes originaive agency resonates with Weil's (1952) "gymnastics of attention" (Eppert, 2004, p. 46). Such gymnastics emanate from an attentiveness to the evental experience, Badiou would argue. Thus, prejudice foments the communicative platform for a listening which "reforms" rather than "deforms." Reform requires dialogic engagement with the unfamiliar. Charles Dickens makes reform primal in *A Tale of Two Cities* by rejecting the ontological assumption of the Enlightenment project that difference/otherness constitutes

communicative deformity. It is this “phenomenological lie” that precipitated the French Revolution, and is typified in *A Tale of Two Cities* as a humanistic agency that Lyotard (1988) would say “prohibits dialogue” (p. 111). Dickens articulates an existential-phenomenological rejection of “blind rationality,” a defining characteristic of the Enlightenment project. The tainted ground, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, drove an ethics of listening by interrogating master narratives or non-negotiable goods that trump individuality in the name commonality. As such, prejudice is—phenomenologically—an immanent response to an *ethos*, and fashions a dialogic critique of an ongoing communicative problematic.

Prejudice’s dialogic implicature invites a listening act which interrupts a universal “stand over” by engaging difference as an embedded necessity, ethically speaking. By so doing, prejudice engages listening as a rhetorical watershed which rests within the postmodern quest for disclosure. This project calls into question closures that protect and perpetuate monologic manipulations, a form of rhetorical paternalism (Scott, 1991). The dialogic implicature of the signs of the time is disclosure. Bonhoeffer’s “confessional” notion of dialogic of responsibility provides an excellent explication of the pragmatic communicative relevance of disclosure within the interpretive framework of the “penultimate.” Arnett (2005) suggests that Bonhoeffer “addresses the ‘penultimate’ within a ‘world come of age,’ calling for honest engagement with a historical moment of diversity and change” (p. 58). This work frames the penultimate from a postmodern construct that we live in a world of difference, and that attentive listening to difference through an acknowledgment of the ground of the other is a dialogic necessity. Prejudice functions as the penultimate sign of the time by disclosing what would otherwise be considered an “assumption of history” (Lacan, 1991). This project turns the table around, in the

tradition of postmodernity, calling forth, not an assumption of history, but “a becoming-imperceptible” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) which interrupts universal metalanguage.

The capacity to interrogate metalanguage positions prejudice as intrinsic to dialogue. Embedded in the dialogic implicature of prejudice is the taken for assumption that enthymematic understanding is a dialogic necessity in human communication. Dialogue is possible when fundamental prejudice, the ground upon which one stands, is engaged enthymematically. The following quotation from Kenneth Cissna and Rob Anderson (1994) illustrates the linkage between fundamental prejudice and enthymematic understanding in dialogic conversation:

Dialogue results when participants refuse to assume that they already know the thoughts, feelings, intentions, or best behaviors of the other. Although the dialogue partner maybe a lifelong friend, one is willing to be surprised by the fundamental strangeness—the unfamiliarity—of a position that is not one’s own. Each person knows that I am not you and that you are not me. Partners in dialogue imaginatively infer realities and perspectives that are not their own and communicate such interpretations tentatively. Perspectival flexibility—ideally from both sides—characterizes dialogue (Cissna & Anderson, 1994, p. 14).

Dialogue involves the enthymematic engagement of fundamental prejudice, the tainted ground of the other, inviting partners in a dialogic conversation “to reach out to the other in an authentic fashion, willing to try to meet and follow the unpredictable consequences of” discourse. Aristotle, by way of enthymematic understanding, Badiou’s Pauline universal singularity, Shakespeare’s rhetorical turn to skepticism otherwise than suspicion, Kierkegaard’s rejection of mass totality, and Levinas’s derivative ethics of responsibility remind us of the dialogic necessity and implicature of prejudice. Dialogically, prejudice encourages “perspectival flexibility.” This flexibility is grounded in *epistemic endoxai* conditions that underwrite plurality.

In other words, prejudice is a rhetorical-phenomenological platform for a communicative praxis that centers on discourse and action, and points to the significance of *ethos* in human life and communication. *Ethos* points to the idea that prejudice is prior to epistemic agency. In a similar vein, prejudice points to the idea that dialogue begins with the primordial acknowledgment of the provincial ground of the other (see Arnett, 2008a).

The dialogic implicature of prejudice suggests both a phenomenological and an ethical reality: the difference and the response before us. Postmodernity possibilizes prejudice as a dialogic necessity through the communicative engagement of difference. This requires a dialogic courage which possibilizes the communicative conditions of responsiveness. As Arneson (2014) argued, responsiveness to radical alterity requires the courage to “acknowledge the plurality of perspectives” (p. 91). Prejudice’s a priori ethical character had been subjected to excessive ontological suspicion, dismissive of the concept’s inherent capability to both create and shape rhetoric not as an epistemic persuasion, but as an activated listening act that exhibits the communicative competent act of attentiveness to multiplicity and individuality. This work, from a postmodernist perspective, deconstructs the ideological masochism of the Enlightenment/modern project. Thus, this work fashions the concept of prejudice as a dialogic opening for continuing the conversation on and about virtue contention within the postmodern community of memory.

Taking the dialogic necessity of prejudice into account, I am inclined to assent to Lyotard’s call to rewrite modernity. Such rewriting involves bearing witness to the differend. By so doing, prejudice shatters and interrupts master narratives. Like “‘micrologies’ that accompany metaphysics in its fall,” prejudice “inscribes the occurrence of the unthought that remains to be thought in the decline of the ‘great’ philosophical thought” (Boeve, 2014, p. 47). Prejudice is a

postmodern “sublime” which invites an anamnesis. The sublime attests to the Enlightenment’s prejudice against prejudice, modernity’s ideological totalitarianism, and the tyranny of individualism. In the simultaneity of the differend and the sublime, prejudice questions a status quo with narratives that bear witness to humanity’s inhumanity toward humanity, and by so doing, suggest a dialogic necessity that Arnett (2007a) calls “dialectical communicative labor.” In the lexicon of Arnett, dialectical communicative labor suggests the necessity for “communicative differentiation” or what Schrag calls “transversal awareness”—an enthymematic understanding amidst differing viewpoints (see Arneson, 2014, p. 84).

Nelson Mandela’s commitment to the “conciliation of difference” (Salazar, 2002) in post-apartheid South Africa foregrounds Arnett’s dialectic communicative labor and Schrag’s transversal awareness, while offering insight into the dialogic necessity of prejudice. As Philippe-Joseph Salazar (2002), A South African scholar of Rhetoric, writes, Mandela called for a new South Africa that brings “plurality to unity, while remaining respectful of the differences that the nation-as-polity entails” (p. 23). Mandela made dialectical communicative labor and transversal awareness a central component of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation by reframing communicative engagement as an open-ended dialogue that obliterates relationships of power and domination and subverts totalitarian ideologies in the name of an expanding circle of “friendly enemies”—to use the metaphor of Chantal Mouffe (2000)—as a place that recognizes and acknowledges “differentiation and difference” (Arnett, 2007a). The phenomenological reality of prejudice is that it possibilizes “‘a unity of contraries’ where the ‘contradictoriness ... is transcended in the dialogic character of the lived experience’” (Schilpp & Friedman, 1967, p. 246; cited in Vogel, 1996, p. 60). Said differently, fragmentation and contention are constitutive of the dialogic implicature of prejudice.

Prejudice's rhetorical production marks dialogue as an ethics that enables dialectical thinking according to tacitly understood communicative "praxis," of "aiming at the 'Good Life,'" as one might say in Ricoeurian terms (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 171). Paul Ricoeur, like Levinas, prioritizes ethics, calling for an attentiveness of the "Self" to "Others" rather than the epistemic dismissiveness of authoritarian prescriptivism. The latter, that is, authoritarian prescriptivism prohibits and subsumes difference as the fundamental ground of dialogue. Prejudice serves as counterpoint to dialogue as an ethical practice and ethics as a dialogic practice. Prejudice creates and opens rhetorical avenues for listening to difference "in an authentic fashion, willing to try to meet and follow the unpredictable consequences of" a communicative encounter (Arnett, 1992, p. 11).

The willingness to listen to difference, meet and follow the unpredictable consequences of a communicative encounter is grounded in a philosophy of "courage," courage that engages the invitation to respond to broader existential-ethical horizons of view of human communication and relationships. Courage, according to Kierkegaard, is the capability to confront social amalgamation, leveling. For Sartre (1953), courage is the authentic expression of human freedom, and any ethics that stymies this existential and phenomenological freedom is a "bad faith" act (p. 83). Engaging one's prejudice and the tainted ground of others is a courage, an ethical courage that articulates the "pragmatic conditions of authenticity" (Eicher-Catt, 2005, p. 113). The importance of this authenticity is that it provides a way to think about prejudice as a priori commitment to dialogic difference, "opening up, and keeping open ... possibilities" (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 298) for interrupting a status quo. Thus, Levinas (1969) is justified in questioning the tyranny of ontology and its methodology subsumption of ethics. Levinas referred to ontology as "a philosophy of injustice" (p. 46) that undermined ethical relations and

difference. Levinas writes, ontology subordinates “the relation with someone, who is an existent, to be a relation with the Being of existents, which, impersonal, permits the apprehension, the domination of existents, subordinates justice to freedom” (p. 45). Prejudice foregrounds dialogue through an ethics of difference or ethical relations.

Dialogic of communication is situated in ethical relations, and it beckons a primordial responsibility: the acknowledgement of difference. In Buber’s terms, this “‘unity of contraries’” ... which calls on us to appreciate the worth of our own patterns and beliefs and, at the same time, to respect others and their ways of seeing and acting in the world...” connects prejudice to ethical relations (Baker-Ohler & Holba, 2009, p. 52). Unity of contraries is a responsive acknowledgment of prejudice. This work point to the dialogic implicature of prejudice in postmodernity, an era of ground contention, inviting participants in an ethical discourse to attentively listen and learn from the “everydayness” of radical alterity. It is no accident that Nelson Mandela’s encounter with the “deductivist monologues of one-way tyranny” (Christians, 1995, p. 67) that characterized apartheid South Africa precipitated his call for dialogic civility in and for post-Apartheid South Africa. Mandela’s responsiveness to singularity, multiplicity, plurality, and individuality is core to dialogue and civility. This responsiveness embraces prejudice as a phronetic—*phronesis*—necessity in every dialogic encounter, spurring what John Hicks (1989) called “soteriological ‘spaces’ within which” dialogic partners can find a discursive opening (1989, p. 240), and listen out for the unknown, uncomfortable, and unexpected.

This emphasis on listening out is at the heart of Bonhoeffer’s “Christocentric first principle ... of listening and silence, countering the ongoing impulse to tell without genuine engagement with Otherness ... listening well underway before speaking begins ... listening before offering one’s voice ... listening with the companion of humility” (Arnett, 2005, p. 51).

Arnett points to the dual aspect of listening: standing one's own ground, responding to the postmodern historical reality, Otherness. (p. 52). Maurice Friedman (1988) would call this attentive responsiveness, a Buberian wisdom: "to listen so faithfully and to respond so fully as to make alive for others the truth that has been made one's own" (p. xvi). Genuine dialogue involves a faithful attention to one's prejudice and the prejudice of the Other. This work frames prejudice as a phenomenological-existential condition of ethical "embeddedness" and "situatedness" of difference. One manifestation of prejudice is dialogic relationality; it points to ethics as a relational responsiveness and openness to the concrete moment. With the above conception of prejudice in mind, I now turn to the linkages between prejudice and dialogic ethics, and by way of conclusion argue that prejudice is a dialogic necessity that problematizes human existence as communicative encounters and/or engagement.

Conclusion: Prejudice and Dialogic Ethics

The label "dialogic ethics" appears frequently in communication scholarship. The concept refers to "the extent to which dialogue and ethics are intertwined aspects of human existence" (Lipari, 2012, p. 228). Drawing from Levinas's derivative "I," dialogic ethics is used here to connote and ethics of responsiveness. This implies listening and learning from the particularities that constitute Otherness. Prejudice invites reflection on the dialogic quality of listening. Jean Gebser, a cultural philosopher of Eastern European origin, alludes to this listening potential in the "dimensions of consciousness," which Arneson (2007a) argued resonates with Buber's "'between' of dialogue" (p. 195). The "dimensions of consciousness" point to a *Gelstalt* that link up enthymematically to co-create meaning in the postmodern community of memory. "The 'between' is a mental-rational designation for an aspect of communication that allows us

access to other dimensions of consciousness” (p. 204). A full discussion of Gebser’s dimensions of consciousness and Buber’s “between,” and how the two concepts interanimate in a dialogic setting are beyond the scope of this work (see Arneson, 2003; Pat Arneson, 2007a).

Prejudice activates the “between,” and the “between,” in turn, manifests itself in dialogue as “expressive consciousness.” Thus construed, prejudice and dialogic ethics implicate each other as “dimensions of consciousness,” and, as such, constitute the ground through which human communication flourishes in the “between.” The “dimensions of consciousness” and the “between” interanimate to constitute prejudice as an *ethos* prior to epistemology in human communication. As an *ethos*, prejudice possibilizes dialogue as an openness and a becoming that expresses the interplay between a conceptual account of a dialogic activity and a dialogic mode of listening. This interplay, however, favors a tensional meeting of minds.

This work frames dialogue as *tensional meeting of minds* based on the necessity of prejudice in dialogue as evidenced in its implicit references in the rhetoric of Aristotle and Saint Paul, epistemology of Shakespeare, the existentialism of Kierkegaard, and the phenomenology of Levinas. These philosophers of communication extend a meaning of prejudice that rests on dialogue as understanding difference and/or radical alterity as the “‘dividing, disrupting, and dissolving aspects’ that prepare the way for awakening consciousness” (Gebser, 1985, p. 284; cited in Arneson, 2003, p. 9). John Stewart and Karen Zediker (2000) described this awakening as “letting the other happen to me while holding my own ground” (p. 232). Prejudice—one’s own ground or the tainted ground—privileges awakening consciousness as an element of dialogue, breaking away from the status quo, the conventional “common ground.” As Julia Wood (2004) argued, the common ground stymies “genuine dialogue ... because almost inevitably the dominant culture defines what ground is common or legitimate” (p. xvii). In

essence, conscious awakening invokes the tainted ground not as commonality, but as a “fusion of horizons.” Gadamer details dialogic opening that appreciates alterity within the context of “multiplicity of meaning” as a process of understanding (White, 1994, p. 92).

Multiplicity of meaning begins with the acknowledgment of divergent narratives as communicative grounds that shape and nourish the “postmodern communicative home” of “touchstone” (Arnett, 2007b, p. 115). Levinas (1991) understood the pragmatic necessity of touchstone as an ethical reality of Otherness, requiring “the immediacy of the sensibility ... the for-the-other of one’s materiality ... the immediacy or the proximity of the other ... the immediate opening up for the other ...” (p. 74). Hence, immediacy entails a responsiveness that honors prejudice as presence—HERE/HEAR I AM, and invites listening out for “something other, always other, always inaccessible, and always still to come” (Levinas, 1987, p. 82). This makes listening an enthymematic first principle because it interrupts and interrogates the ontological monopolism that characterized modernity’s proclivity for pretentious telling. Such a listening act that interrupts and interrogates a status quo—a “confession” that prejudice is a primordial narrative bias before us.

Rhetorical prejudice—in the sense it is advanced in this work—tied to dialogic ethics provides originary insights into difference as a communicative first principle of ethics, appreciating the tainted ground, radical alterity and differing narratives as reflections of primordial openness in a dialogic conversation. Prejudice is not an ontological enquiry into difference, but a phenomenological-existential opening to “ambivalent encounters” wherein disagreements lead not to dismissiveness, but the willingness to engage the strange and uncomfortable as “mature encounter with Otherness” (Levine, 1985, p. 141). As an otherwise than closure, prejudice fosters and constitutes a burgeoning of alterity resolved to portraying an

ethics of “relational dialectics” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996) ever attentive to listening and learning. Arnett and Arneson (2016) précised this thus: “radical differences begin, accompany, and transform our communication with one another in a time of otherness and offer a pragmatic reminder to learn from difference” (p. xii). This pragmatic reminder reveals the listening dimension of dialogic ethics, and opens opportunities for “subverting” a status quo.

As Arendt suggested in the *Promise of Politics*,

the world comes into being only if there are perspectives; it exists as the order of worldly things only if it viewed, now this way, at any given time ... in other words, human beings in the true sense of the term can only exist only where there is a world, and there can be a world in the true sense of the term only where the plurality of the human race is more than a simple multiplication of a single species. (pp. 175-176)

We live in an era of plurality of narratives and standpoints. Arendt’s depiction of the “human condition”—referring to modernity’s disregard for ground, which she describes as a “banality of evil”—exemplifies how rhetorical prejudice bears witness to the signs of the time, and generates a dialogic competent ethics that enable service and productivity otherwise than power and aggressivity. The former, responsive to individuality (see Tocqueville, 1969), points to the phenomenological dangers of individualism, the communicative dark side and effects of the Enlightenment project (Arnett, 2007b, pp. 117-119). The latter, unresponsive to individuality, reified “dogmatic rationalism” (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 10) as the rhetorical rhythm of *sensus communis*.

This work connects the Enlightenment and modernity’s view of communicative competence to epistemologically distinct variants of tyranny, all dismissive of the prejudicial ground of otherness. Postmodernity deconstructed the enlightenment’s prejudice against

prejudice, offering instead a phronetic confession that discloses the tainted ground as a communicative necessity. The phronetic confession emerges from within the discerned responsiveness to an enthymematic relationality that does not dictate, but summons and invites the co-creation of meaning and understanding as “relational openness” (Arnett, 2005, p. 209). This understanding of prejudice within the framework of phronetic confession is correlated to Alan Badiou’s ethics of singularity—“the valorization of difference” (2001, p. xxx). In a certain way, this is the postmodern ethics of narrative contention which constitutes difference as “healthy ambiguity” (Stewart, 1998, p. 340) within a competent communicative act that positions prejudice.

The history of the prejudice points to the (healthy) ambiguity before us—an ambiguity that derives its efficacy in the inductive dialogic of plurality. This work, in dialogue with Aristotle, Saint Paul, Shakespeare, Kierkegaard, and Levinas, opens communicative praxis, competence, and encounter to “the inexhaustible play of” (Nancy, 2013, p. 13) prejudice. This inexhaustible openness advocates the irreducible singularity and alterity of otherness, and foregrounds the postmodern agenda: subverting the epistemic impulse to totalize and control knowledge. Arnett (2011b) suggests how such a subversion assumes “a hermeneutic bias—there is no one universal understanding of what constitutes communication ethics” (p. 45). Hence for communication for ethics, prejudice is the “communicative content” of dialogue (p. 46). Prejudice “shapes” dialogue by *possibilitizing* the fundamental ground of difference as “the amalgam of discourse and action that informs and drives the economy of communicative praxis” (Schrage, 1997, p. 42). This work points to a communicative praxis propelled by a narrative ground of prejudice-shaped responsiveness to plurality, a dialogic necessity of the postmodern era.

This work acknowledges the inevitability of prejudice and the embedded summons to an enlarged mentality. The inevitability of prejudice and the embedded summons of an enlarged mentality are interwoven facets of dialogic ethics. Prejudice is contingent upon an enlarged mentality and an enlarged mentality is contingent upon prejudice, and the two come together in a concatenation of difference that is dialogic. This work illustrates the relationality and synchronicity of prejudice and enlarged mentality by positing an ethical responsiveness, attentiveness, and the engagement of fundamental difference. This dialogic triumvirate of responsiveness, attentiveness, and engagement resonates with Schrag's "rhetorical turn," which Arnett (2011b) says involves the ethical acknowledgment of fundamental prejudice (p. 55).

This work offers hope in understanding how prejudice "gives meaning and a place to stand" (p. 54) in every human relation, interaction, and communication. Furthermore, this work constitutes an invitation to a dialogic opportunity to encounter radical alterity, existentially, phenomenologically, and ethically; and by so doing, welcome the tainted ground of the radically different other—a taken for granted ground—as an embedded, situated reality. The hope is that this study will help frame a dialogic communication ethics within a history of the problematic term, prejudice, with the objective of displaying the pragmatic reality that dialogic communication ethic begins not in objectivity nor in the commonality itself, but rather in the very ground of prejudice that shapes the conversation and its conventional patterns. This essay unmasks the past assumption that prejudice can and should be always eradicated. Such thinking falls prey to the modernist set of assumptions hostile to the existential reality—to paraphrase Buber—that we walk in the modern-day light.

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